Start of Karl Baum Collection

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Tegelen August 25, 1944

My dears:

Today, August 25, 1944, is exactly two years since Leni and Ilse were deported to Poland. Now, just 10 days ago, the second invasion began into Southern France and all are counting on a quick end to the war. I will begin to describe to you, my dear ones, our war experiences since war broke out.

From our last letters in 1940 you learned that, thank God, all was going well for us. Father's illness grew steadily worse, so that it became a redemption for him when the dear God called our beloved father, of blessed memory, to him, on October 10, 1940. We grieved deeply at Father's death. Yet, today, we take joy in it, since our father was spared in death all the suffering that our mother had to live through after that time.

In March, 1940, we paid the rest of our debts for the machinery here in the Netherlands as well as the electrical refrigeration system. Thus, since we were free from debt, from that time and worked only for profit, the first stage (lit."paw") of our fixed goal had been gained.

Jenni said then, "We just hope, now that we have paid for everything, no war comes." With such a pessimism, Max and I always laughed at Jenni since we did not believe that there would be war between Germany and the Netherlands. But it was otherwise, as at a second glance came Friday, May 10, 1940 -- a day that we will not forget as long as we live.

That morning at 4 o'clock Jenni came into our room, awakened us saying: "Don't you hear the explosions and the firing?" What can it possibly be?" "Exercises", we answered, turning over to sleep more. A half hour later, however, we heard planes flying quite low. We jumped out of bed and

saw the swastikas on the planes. Then we knew that the Netherlands had been overrun by Germany. We dressed quickly and ran into the street where we heard from acquaintances that the first German tanks and armored (forces) cars had rolled over the Reiyks Weg (Royal Highway??) toward Maastricht. A few minutes later, German soldiers came riding out of all the streets and alleys on bicycles with fixed bayonets and hand grenades on a string. When I think back to this sight, I get chills up and down my spine.

The Germans who had settled here welcomed the soldiers jubilantly, while we, naturally, were afraid lest these Germans-in-exile betray us Jews to the soldiers. Dear Jenni wanted us youngsters to flee on bicycle. Thank God, this came to nothing more, since as we later learned, these refugees were trapped between the two fronts, (a fate which) could not be described in volumes.

At 6 a.m. the Moses family arrived, including the dog, thinking they would be safer with us than in Sittard, since Sittard had immediately been chosen as a military assembly point for the Germans and they were moving German transports through there day and night. The Moses family stayed with us for the first eight days. Until 7 a.m. we still knew nothing (of the fate) of our parents, so we sent Ilse to them to find out what their situation was. Dear father sat as always, smoking his cigar at the window, looking out on the endless rows of tanks. armored cars and autos. As Ilse then saw father, she said that the good old man did not believe that these were truly German soldiers. It must also be said in our father's favor

In addition, the soldiers bore placards with the slogan: "Dutchmen, do not fire. We are your friends" attached to their cars and armored vehicles. At 10 o'clock father came to us and was speechless to see the Moses family there. No one had any desire to work until father said: "You are meshuge. Do your duty and work anyway and let it all come to you."

After the people recovered from the first shock, the well-known ever-practical Netherlander appeared and began laying away food like squirrels. Every one bought everything available and in a few hours on this day we had receipts that would normally equal an entire week's. Whether or not we wanted to, we worked hard in order to fill all the requests. And you can be assured that we struck while the fire was hot.

Saturday morning at five o'clock, our first 'customers' (Lit. famous ones) -- 5 MOFFENSOLDATEN*bought everything that they saw. One said: "You still have so much meat and sausage, when at home there is no more."

Shops were not only besieged by the populace but the soldiers as well. The soldiers received extra pay called "Reichskreditkassen-schein" (i.e. Government credit slips).

Just before 7 o'clock that evening we viewed our first aerial combat between French and German hunters. By luck there was no damage.

Sunday morning we heard from one of our customers that a Jew of Geleen was arrested by the Germans. Now, my dears, you can imagine for yourselves how we felt about this. Every second we thought we would be joining the line. The next day we were told, however, that he was free again. He was accused of having said "every German soldier who enters my store will be poisoned." The German officer interrogating the Jew was given to understand. He did not believe this slander, and thus the man was set free again.

*i.e. German soldiers

Later we heard that after the invasion of Holland by the Germans, the resident Germans including the Jews were arrested by the Dutch government. Dear Leni also spent two days in prison, and Jull. Gottschalk with his wife spent 5 days (there), although all were freed after the surrender of Holland.

After a few weeks, no butcher was allowed to slaughter pigs himself. They were slaughtered in Sittard and parceled out. Beef and veal were still free and we could buy them from the farmers ourselves. We slaughtered each week one head of cattle and 2 or 3 head of calf, which was an especial joy for the parents since it reminded them so much of "Bauchem". Sorrowfully we had to work very differently than our aryan colleagues. They stored away Blockwurst, Rauchfleishh, bacon, ham and lard. However, we had to liquidate everything quickly because we had to expect to be closed down at any time. Later we still had no limit on sheep and slaughtered 8 - 10 animals a week until all meat supply as well as other victuals were rationed.

On the fourth Saturday of the Occupation, when the store was filled with customers, a junior officer and soldier appeared. In the now-familiar tone, he asked Max: "Are you the proprietor? Then read this through." It was a prohibition for the German army against purchasing from Jews. A sign which he had with him with the notice "Juedisches Geschäfft" (Jewish-Owned Establishment) was to be hung up by Max in the officer's presence. The customers in the store began to laugh aloud and joke about the "Rotmoffen" (Dirty Germans). Someone placed the placard in the window and the net effect was that all the Jewish businesses were busier than ever. All the wretchedness which we believed we had left behind in Germany now started over again.

One Friday in December we were visited by two men in a car. By change I was alone in the store and, placing themselves in front of the

cash register, they asked if I were the proprietor and called "Baum". You can well understand that at that moment my heart was in my mouth. I went to tell Jenni and Max and went with the Kela* upstairs.

The salutation was : "Mr. Baum, I await your answer on an affidavit and can arrest you immediately. Your parents emigrated (from Germany) to Holland in '38. (They) sold a house and property. Where is that money?"

Answer: "In the Deutschen Bank in Essen."

"A deposit of 8 - 10,000 marks is missing. To make a long story short, that we were alleged to have received money from a peasant illegally. I could prove to him that we paid the costs of the emigration for Albert and ourselves from this account. After some arguing he was temporarily satisfied. In closing he said simply that he would come back again. We never heard anything further of this matter.

In October 1940, Fern was the first of our family to lose her livelihood. In the summer of 1940, they still had many guests and could live for a time from the earnings. From 1941, Jews were barred from all bathing areas. In order to stay alive and pay the daily expenses, Rudi was apprenticed to a machine shop in Maastricht. Fern worked very hard in the worst circumstances in a sand-pit. We gave them meat and lard each weekend and dear Jettchen always did a lot for them.

In January 1941, all Jews were required to surrender their radios; luckily we had no radio.

In May, the sports arena in Geleen was struck by a rocket through which every pane of glass in Geleen up to Lindhovel was broken and tiles were blown from many roofs.

Despite great difficulties, Gerta and Max were engaged to be married in May. The religious ceremony took place in Valkenburg. It was in Hannchens

*Kelavim - "dogs" for Hebrew

apartment and the Moses family, Gerta's parents and we were the guests. We celebrated in accordance with the time as well as and badly as possible.

After the German invasion of Russia on June 21st, our hopes of a quick end to the war rose. Therefore we were again disappointed by the turn of events.

We received reports from our dear family from Aachen that they had been expelled from their house and forced into barracks. They were permitted to take only the minimal goods with them. Provisions were received only in restricted amounts. Meat, cereal and fat, Jews did not receive at all and we sent packages right away which all fortunately arrived.

At the same time, we received a report that the first Jewish deportation transport began. Luckily, our family were not among the first. I will spare the description of the different parting notes that we received from our dear ones. Therefore we still did not think that the same fate awaited us. In the meantime, the Gestapo were not idle here.

One day in the summer of '41 they picked up all Jewish looking men in the streets of Amsterdam and shipped them off to Mauthausen. There these poor fellows worked in a mercury mine in the worst of circumstances and their poor relations received death notices daily.

A three-day strike in Amsterdam protesting this, unique in the world's history, that a people struck for their oppressed Jewish neighbors, was put down by the German police and Gestapo in the most brutal manner of the underworld, and many brave Netherlanders gave their lives since the thugs did not look back at those they had killed.

We lived after that with growing dread as the Germans took ground on all fronts and grew more brazen and regular in their appearances daily.

Our emigration papers came too late, so that despite all our efforts nothing availed since the American consulate had been closed in the meantime.

In May 1942, our business was closed even as the other Jewish businesses had been closed in November 1941.

I was able to work for a colleague to whom we sent our customers, as a journey man. Max went to work for a farmer and received for that foods that were no longer available on rations.

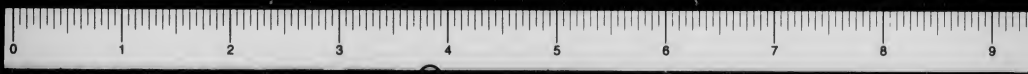
In May 1942, we were required also to wear a Jewish star on the left side of our chest - a big yellow, six-pointed star of David on which was written "Jood". We first had to wear the star on Sundays, and what was the outcome?

Leni came from Maastricht that morning and explained that she was greeted by all those she passed - even strangers. At noon Max and I went to Wolff's in Geleen -- who is a cousin of Benno Wolff's wife. Mr. Wolff used to be a (Sales) representative of the Rollman family and Rose Kohn.

Our experience was just as Leni had told. We were greeted by both those we knew and strangers. When we got on a train or trolley or bus, people stood to give us seats. Later, Jews were only permitted to travel 3 km and then board only after all the others were seated.

On June 30th, there were further new restrictions. These ordinances were so harsh that many Jews committed suicide. I will include one of these decrees which were allegedly given to keep public law and order:

1. From 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. Jews must remain in their houses.
2. A Jew is forbidden to enter private houses or private establishments.
3. Jews may go into shops only between 3 and 5 p.m.
4. Jews may not enter any Beauty or Barber Shop.



5. Jews may not travel even on trolleys or busses.

6. Jews were excluded from almost all occupations and must immediately be dismissed, etc. etc.

A few weeks later our bicycles were also confiscated, bicycle riding forbidden and one other (which is that) a Jew who was found riding a borrowed bicycle would be harshly punished.

Between May and June, 1942, we were required by the Jewish Council in Amsterdam, the so-called official Jewish authority, and which alone could act in connection with the Dutch or German Administrative authorities, to complete a questionnaire of no less than 200 questions and through this list every one knew, if you will excuse my saying so, when any one last went to the toilet.

We were required to return this questionnaire in person to the Gestapo and that was, until that time, the most nerve-wracking experience of my life, so I was happy and lucky to leave that house again. The lists were allegedly filled out for emigration purposes, but shortly thereafter we were called to the Gestapo and had to offer tax script which had been received for t the payment of an exit tax.

At this time, I visited the family of E. Klein for the last time and have heard nothing more from them since.

In May 1942, came the first great English air strike on Cologne, with 1000 Bombers. We all counted on a quick liberation but again our hopes were false. A visitor to the Wolffs from Cologne said: "It is no longer Cologne on the Rhine, rather Cologne on Ash."

In July 1942, the deportation of Jews to Poland from Holland began, and Reni Kaufman, the sister of Gerta, was in the first transport.

On August 22nd, arrived the notice that Leni and Ilse were to report to the local police on the 25th, where the Jews assembled for the trip by bus to Maastrict and from there via Westerborg to Poland. It is very hard for me to write of this even though we expected this, even all to be sent together. Between the call-up and assembly the houses where these Jews lived were guarded by the S.A. Nevertheless, many Jews took flight in order to hide.

Our dear children proved themselves very strong, and courageous, lessening the harshness of Jenni's departure. Max and I took the children to the Jewish Community House. What occurred here cannot be described in words. Of the 40 Jews who had lived in Geleen, 25 were deported to Poland. Since each was allowed 25kg of luggage, the poor souls had back packs that were nearly too heavy for them to lift. Women with children of 2 years, old men, invalids, sat here; parents took leave of their children, and children bade farewell to their parents. How Jenni endured all this, I still do not know. Can I explain to you how it feels (to see) children torn away from their mothers? They were the only and last possession that Jenni still had. It is now more than two and one half years, yet we have heard nothing more from her.

Hannchen, Fern and Rudi were also deported in this group from Volkenburg. And from there, too, we have heard nothing more.

One day later, Max and I receive a call for the work-service muster.

An acquaintance of Ilse with whom we regrettably became close too late, provided a Schuilplatz for me. I remained there alone and Max was at the Jewish Council in Geleen, until I was hidden on Sept. 8, 1942. Mother's departure was very hard on me, since I did not know what further had happened to the others.

Before the second call-up, many Jews were hidden by good Dutch. In the meantime, the Germans had arrested again all previous officers and soldiers as POWs and because many of these and also of those young people who were to be sent to Germany for hard labor, were hidden away the count was about 300,000 men so that the Underground Organization had much work to do in order to provide these people with food ration cards, since it was impossible to feed two people with the small amount of food allotted to each person.

We received, for example, a weekly allotment of 125 gr of meat with bones, 125 gr of butter, 70 gr peas, 3 kg potatoes, 1 kg bread, etc. per person. The ration cards needed for the so-called "Onderduiker" were automatically stolen by well-organized and armed patriots of the various districts. Many were also provided with false identification from the captured who had been killed by the NSB. We, too, were provided with identification cards.

Through the intervention of my present landlord who is an agent by trade, I always received reports from the family. Thus I learned on Nov. 3, 1942, that the family from Sittard were deported along with many others. They had the great good fortune to be taken into the old guard where they were accountable to Fritz Gottschalk and his wife from Geilenkirchen, so that until today, 28th August 1944, they remain at Westerborg in Holland.

On the 28th of September 1942, I received company and Mr. Wolff from Geleen with whom we were friends also came here. Mr. Wolff was married to an Aryan which was our good fortune.

On October 25, 1942, Geleen was heavily bombarded through an error that others cannot explain to us. More than 100 were killed and over 500 houses destroyed. I heard this the next day and thank God that my own were not killed. Fortunately we had stored as much as possible clothes and

laundry just before at Good Netherlanders. Unfortunately the house with the earthen floor was almosdestroyed so that we lost everything except a few valuables which were stored in the cellar.

On April 1, 1943, a new regulation appeared in the newspaper ordering all Jews from all provinces to report to the Concentration Camp Vught on April 10th.

What this meant, especially for mother, you can well imagine for yourselves. Since she could not bear such hardship, our house doctor certified that she could not be transported. The Gestapo did not recognize such mercy and pity, so that mother was sent away with Gerda and Max. Jenny was still able to flee through the help of Good Dutch and so also came to me.

In Sittard, Max and Gerda were again pulled from the car by the Gestapo and brought to Maastricht. Here women and men were already separated. In Maastricht the bloodhounds wanted to know from them where Jenni had hidden. Naturally, they knew nothing and so they were released after two days of torture and had to go to Vught alone, without guard, which they did. This we just learned now. We don't understand it, but we hear from Mrs. Wolff, that Max had always said that he did not wish to leave mother alone. He could not help her, however, since men and women were already separated in Sittard.

Our dear ones remained in Vught only a few weeks before being transported to Westerborg. Dear mother had to be taken to the hospital there any way, as she suffered a complete nervous breakdown.

Here it was our dear Mrs. Wolff who supplied mother with a food parcel. (It happened also that with each selection from Vuhgt that whatever they had of value was stolen). In addition to this, in Vught, everything -- everything -- except what they wore was stolen. So there Mrs. Wolff also had to supply clothing for them which was/indescribably difficult task after three years at war.

Every type of goods except salt, vim* and ata were rationed. Yard goods are simply not to be acquired at all.

On the black market, there are naturally goods to buy but for prices that are astronomical, for example:

1 Kg butter was	2.60	fl. now on the black market	60. - fl
1 kg potatoes	.08	fl	1.50
1 pkg cigarettes	.25		10.
1 cigar	.06		4.
palmolive soap bar	.12-1/2		12.
1 kg meat		fl	30
bicycle tire	3.50	fl	175
1 kg coffee	1.60		400
1 suit	65.		1000 etc.

In June 1943, many Dutch who were by chance riding their bicycles had them confiscated and 14 days later they were required to turn in their radios. Naturally, many radios were not turned in and thus followed much trouble. Fortunately the people who sheltered us had a second radio so that at least we heard the English, Americans and Russian broadcasts. During the heaviest bombings, when one bomb hit the whole residential district it was forbidden to hear radio broadcasts so this was done secretly.

But on September 8, 1943 at 8:45 p.m. when Radio London announced that Italy had surrendered, all Holland knew two minutes later.

As for us, we had to pay the people with whom we were hidden. We paid 20 florins a week, altogether a small price and we sold our valuables that were saved from the bombardments.

A sporting companion from Berlin, also an old fighting companion of DER had an important position and he was able to keep our dear ones until Sept. 9, 1943 when they were deported to Poland. In December 1943, we received a letter from Max sent from Warsaw through Mrs. Wolff, which the poor fellow wrote, again needing warm clothing and food. Mrs. Wolff was able with help from our friend (Esp, Noll, whom you surely know) to send more packages. We never received a return receipt from MAX.

* Vim

Early January 1944, we heard only that the invaders had also deported mother to Poland and we have also heard nothing more of her.

Until now, late August, the Moses family is still in Westerborg, Kurt temporarily as a carpenter in Zeist and it is also our friend Mrs. Wolff who is in correspondence and still sends food packages.

On September 8, I will have been here exactly two years without once setting foot in the street. If someone had suggested this to me before, I would have directly announced that I could not bear it, but as you can see, all things are possible.

Even my suit, which I haven't had off my body for two years, goes along -- one wears it shiny. We even live also in "shiny" conditions.

I could write thick books about our lives here, although this would go too far and I hope that I can explain this to you my dears, by mouth. We sleep much, read more, play now and then cards, and we have learned, thank God, to speak very good Dutch and also some writing. Sadly we could not learn English since we must live very quietly and a Gestapo lives next door.

We live in Tegelen near Vendo; here there is an enormous airport for Western Europe. The airport is now and again bombarded by American and English planes and when we hear the whistle of the 4000 kg bombs, then you can imagine the anxiety! Outside this, all the American and English planes which bomb the Ruhr region return over us and this is especially hard for Jenni since she suffered the force of the bombing of Geleen on Oct. 15, 1942 and one never forgets an experience like this in a lifetime.

It is naturally very interesting to see when the hunters take off to pursue the bombers and fire upon them. But the interest pales before the danger, which is very great since most times a hunter or a bobmer

is brought down. Then, when they fall no stone remains standing on another, and it has frequently happened in this way, that houses were reduced to rubble.

We live with Catholic people and during these moments the prayers "beloved is Jesus-Christ" and "Shema Yisrael" are on the lips of each of us.

There is good out of this evil; Jenni frequently has trouble going to a known place.* However, when the fliers come through it works like a well oiled machine.

So we remain here and wait with growing yearning for the long expected liberation and for our dear ones from Poland.

On August 23rd, Radio London reported that Paris had fallen, and on the next day, we heard that Rumania had surrendered and begun to fight with the Allies. On Sept. 4th, Brussels was liberated and on Sept. 8th, Finland laid down arms; also on Sept. 8th bulgaria declared war against Germany. Here we see only German soldiers retreating on the roads.*

We ~~turned over~~ our sadness into indescribable joy and thought we would be liberated in no more than 4 or 5 days later. Sadly, however, our joy was too early.

My dears, the three months Sept. Oct. and Nov. were for all of us the time of greatest tension that a person can bear. Now watching out for the liberation was not our most pressing concern, but Russia, so that my friend Wolff and I had to be alert day and night in an unheated room. In addition we got no more fat to eat so we have been lucky only to have rheumatism in the arms from this.

On Sept. 17th, German railway officials descended suddenly seeking quarters on our right and on our left; they also asked our landlord for shelter but he was quick-witted enough to say that he had six children and

*i.e. - defecating

not even enough room for them. Trains for civilians were halted and we had heard nothing from Mrs. Wolff since Sept. 2nd. From Sept. 18th we also received no electrical current, and what was worse for us because of this was that we could not listen to the radio and heard only rumors and never knew whether or not Geleen was liberated. Newspapers also appeared no more, since we were cut off in a sector of 40-50 kilometers from the south, north and west, and only the east -- Germany -- was open to us.

Later there appeared a local newspaper in Venlo which, however, had to be brought daily, since all men from the age 16 to 60 years were under orders for hard labor; since almost no Dutchmen assembled, men were simply taken from the street if they had no work permits to build trenches. Besides, this, a few times a week, all the male and female bicyclists were simply grabbed off the streets.

Suddenly a new danger appeared when thousands of Polish, Russian, Ukranian and German men and women came here to build fortifications and were in part billeted in private houses. Here, too, we got away lightly.

Venlo was heavily bombarded on October 28th and 29th, with the result that we were without water for a few days. The German police and German Administrative authority including The Party had complete power after Nov. 11th, since all the good Netherlander in City and Railway officials, including the mayor and police disappeared, so a network had to be called into life which could warn all those in hiding against a possible raid. Thanks to cooperation, it all went like clockwork. Everyone knew something was up almost before it began. There were also, naturally, many false alarms, so that on Nov. 2nd when the first real raid took place it was a great failure for the Germans.

We also had a separate hiding place in our house, which placed us literally over the heads of the Germans when they came. After 4 hours the raid was over and we outsmarted the criminals, thank God, this time. On Nov. 4th, Venlo was again bombarded very heavily so that the inner city lay in dust and ashes and the newspaper could no longer appear.

In the meantime the Allied broadcasts from Eindhoven went into operation. Two Dutch patriots made the broadcasts middays and evenings under the name of "Knocki" so that we were again able to follow the progress on the fronts. We heard that the Americans had freed the provinces of Zeeland and North Brabant from the enemy. When the Islands of Walchun and Zuid Burland, which guarded the part of Antwerp were finally in Allied hands , we knew that our freedom hour would soon arrive, but our patience was being well-tested. By the way at this time two patriots went into a small hotel with a small recording device where the Germans were quartered. They received current ~~STROM~~ from Germany.

On Nov. 10th, there was another raid ~~and also this~~ which lasted 12 hours we survived well.

The German party bigwigs in their yellow uniforms were very numerous and no factory or business, even the smallest, was spared their visit; ~~and~~ all, absolutely all, was stolen legally through proclamation, decrees, etc. Horses, cows, cars, equipment, machinery, food, rugs, curtains - everything - absolutely everything - these pigs took. Ironically, if we left it here it would surely be bombed by the Americans or the English and we can use these things well!

The German family that lived next door to us also came a few days later with a huge furniture truck and took back all they had given away. The woman even brought a list so that nothing was forgotten. We all hoped

that for these barbarians all Germany will be bombed out.

Naturally, we could no longer receive ration cards from our friend Mrs. Wolff, but this difficulty also passed quickly since the director of the distribution gave us our entitlement regularly. Our rations were reduced from week to week and finally we received only 3/4 of a loaf of bread each week on this certificate. Potatoes disappeared 14 days ago. Then, the farmers whose land lay directly on the Maas were evacuated and all the potatoes confiscated by the Germans. Our horde is already long exhausted and we received 50 Kg from close acquaintances. If we are not freed by then (the time these are used up) we do not know what we will do.

For us men, the most difficult is that we have nothing to smoke, and neither with money nor good words, could cigarettes or cigars be procured. A good neighbor -- a non-smoker -- had saved up a few smokes, and from him we received (smokes) okertjes. and when his supply was exhausted, he supplied us with tabacco leaves from his garden. In order to smoke one cigarette we needed 10 - 12 matches and the taste - "er erreichte den Hof mit Mich und not." [1]

During the night of November 12-13, there was a terrible din of soldier-filled cars coming and going on our street, and we saw in the morning that the soldiers were then setting up a battery of field [illegible] behind our house on a hockey field. Twenty-four hours later the first slavo of the 8.8 cannons thundered. It was a hallaballoo as if the world would end, and our house shook in its path. At first the soldiers only fired at airplanes, but later also to the front. The Allied offensive had begun on Nov. 16th, and since the middle of October we had been able to see the beacons of the Allied forces across the sky. In the house next to us, where the Germans lived earlier, the staff of the

1 - stank us out of house and home.

battery made its nest and the telephone circuits for them were laid in our garden. Also, all our equipment had been moved into the cellar in the mean time and that this was needed we knew when there was an artillery battle on Nov. 17th that lasted from 8:15 p.m. to 10:45 p.m. There was no thought of sleeping that night. Our first work of the next day was to move the beds into the cellar and since that night we have been living in the cellar - sleeping and eating in the cellar, and except for grabbing some fresh air or using the wc we stayed in the cellar all the time. Only my friend Wolff and I exchange places every two hours, since someone always has to be upstairs on the lookout for any possible raids. Here one needn't speak of the proverbial "Jewish fear" and my friend Wolff, especially, since he never played any sports except C.H. (?), proved to be a man.

Our landlord had too much fear of the fire bombs to come out of the cellar. For example our hiding place during raids lay between the rafters and the wood ceiling so that when grenades fly over us and explode around us we often have the feeling that the house is going to collapse because of the air pressure and we will be buried in the rubble. As soon as the raid is over when we come out of the hiding places, the first thing we do is thank our God that we have survived again.

On 21st in the afternoon about 17:15 a sergeant came to us demanding billeting for himself and three men. "If you don't give us the room as requested, then we will take the whole house." -- that was his opening remark. The soldiers began to take over immediately and after a half hour they were in place and immediately began to lay telephone wires when the order came "We withdraw!" By 17:45 we were again our own masters in our own house. A soldier said to the Landlord: "Be happy that we retreat since otherwise ill would have come here." The Allies fire heavily.

In 14 days this is the sixth time that as soon as we set up the artillery we have had to retreat further.

And that soldier was absolutely correct was proven to us personally the next day. On Nov. 21st the battery was gone. We breathed freely. The restoration of quiet was the best medicine for our nerves. Nov. 22nd was a fine November day. The clouds hung low and were raincloud. Neither airplanes nor clearing were in the air. It was all quiet. The front was still 4 Km across the Maas. At 8 that evening, just as we were ready to go to bed, since we had no light and had to use short candles and torches and so went to sleep with the chickens, the house shook when a bomb must have landed a short distance from us. Three or four seconds later, a new explosion and we heard the crash of roof and chime of breaking glass. Each one of us pleaded with God for help in most desparate fashion. No one knew how much damage had been done and no one had the courage to go into the street. Only an hour later did we go through the house -- often walking on shards of glass. We could not light a light since our blackout shades were blown away. The next morning we saw the destruction. The house immediately to the left of ours had sustained a direct hit with a bomb and the bomb had left a deep hole to the depth of the first story. In front of the street and our neighbor across the street also had been hit, and behind us, less than 2 meters from the place where just the day before the cannons had stood, a bulls-eye hit left its mark at the former munitions storage for this cannon. A miracle? who knows? Our lives lay in God's hand who cared for and protected us.

We were in no-man's land and since Nov. 23rd Allied and German artillery shells fly back and forth over us. We hear the firing and the explosions and in-between the flight of the rockets.

Since the 23rd (the Allies) reached the Maas 1 km behind us, and since the 24th they reached the 4 km at Venlo 4 km away from us.

How much longer we still have to wait for our liberation, we must still watch. I am writing this letter on Nov. 29 and will with God's help finish it at home.

The party bigwigs and railroaders are gone since yesterday. Since yesterday the soldiers have been busy stealing the switches and other railroad equipment and we are still bound hand and foot.

Although we often planned to flee behind the lines to our house, no one will take the risk now.

I forgot to mention, that on Nov. 23rd, our hair was barbered for the first time in two years and three months, and this too was a great joy for us. Now I appear human again and if the Allies come quickly, then we can at least travel the 50 km to Geleen without attracting attention.

An electrician, a friend of the family, showed us on Nov. 23rd that we can indeed receive radio broadcasts, since if we connect a few wires in the electrical box, the current flows from Kaldenkirchen, ~~and is~~ intended for the German soldiers. We, too, hear radio with German current. Can you think of anything better? Since Nov. 17th we have not been out of our clothes night or day, since we must expect a raid at any moment. Our own growing hordes are exhausted in mid-September. We eat enough to live of dried bread and "Moses-soup" drawn out of the water. Apple butter spread very thin is a treat for us. Dear Jenni traded two bed sheets for 1-1/2 kg of bacon.

My dears, what we have endured since mid-September is not to be described in words. Our landlord has been made 3/4 crazy through all this and cannot be dealt with anymore. The excitement of raids, billeting, or possible evacuation is not to be described. Every one is completely

unnerved and even sick. Just believe me, that I do not exaggerate, the naked truth is much worse than all our loss is great.

Today, Dec. 2nd, I continue my report. We still remain under the yoke of the Germans and our lives grow more unbearable day by day. For all our sustenance we have received since Nov. 27th only half a bread per person per week. We get potatoes now and then from friends who are depleting their own stores. In addition we are bombarded daily by the English and our fears grow over our ability to survive the war. Friday, Nov. 24th, we had a peaceful day on which we heard no more bombs and already believed that the shelling had stopped in our sector and we found new courage. Saturday, Nov. 25th was also quiet in the morning. We were all above -- that is on the ground floor. Suddenly at 11:40 there began great explosions, one, another one, and again and again with an unbelievable noise. We dropped to the floor and crawled on all fours to the cellar steps. After a few minutes we returned to the ground floor where a frightening sight greeted our eyes. A bomb had landed right in front of our house and had bored a deep hole in the street. Three steps away from us lay a teamster and his horse, dead, torn by shrapnel.

Ten steps to the left lay another corpse, half of whose abdomen had been torn away by shrapnel. Naturally all the houses around were more or less damaged, but this destruction is nothing compared with the loss of life. At the home of good friends of ours, a bomb exploded in the kitchen, where the housewife was just working; when her son saw the exterior walls collapsing, he threw her to the floor, laid a chair over the poor old lady, and pulled her that way under the rubble and only through God's hand mother and son escaped with just a few skin wounds. I know one thing -- If I survive this war, I will never forget this November 25th. Since that day there have

been many rumours. Different villages around us have been ordered by the Nazis to evacuate since most people are searching for their safety in flight and find a new home here in Tegelen. Naturally, the Nazis heard about this and between Nov. 27th and 29th more than 300 SS were here making raids and more than 200 people fell thus into the hands of these bloodhounds and were transported to Germany. Our nerves were completely tested by this and we thank God that the louts did not find us. So it went from week to week. On Dec. 23rd we received the order that we must evacuate. We had 1-1/2 hours to pack everything up. Everyone made preparations. My friend Wolff and I still were not going to leave and made a hole under the floor where there was no cellar and stowed all the food we still had there. The greatest problem was naturally water. The water supply had stopped a month before and water had to be brought by acquaintances from the pump. So we filled bottles with water and stowed these, too, in our hiding place. By three o'clock, we still had heard nothing. Finally at 5 p.m. the report came that the evacuation was delayed 14 days. What this meant to us you cannot imagine. We said that with time all would be won.

On Christmas eve we stayed in the cellar. The same day we had made slaw from sugar beets so we had something to put on our bread for Christmas day.

In the first week of January 1945, 90 infants died of malnutrition. On Jan. 4th, Venlo had to evacuate officially and Tegelen in a few days. Luckily, the evacuation of Tegelen was only rumored. On Jan. 16th, we heard that an Allied offensive had begun near Littard* and we found courage again that only a few days were required before we would be liberated. How great was our disappointment when we heard that the troops were still laying outside Roermond and again we would not be liberated. Thus there were two raids

*Sittard

the next day - at 10 in the morning and in the evening at 6. We just sat down for the evening meal -- and we had for the first time whole potatoes and carrots-a holiday meal for us - when there was a knock at the door and the command called: "Open at once" Wolff and I ran up the stairs without hesitation and had to climb over the rafters in the dark to reach our hiding place creeping on hands and feet. But with God's help, we came out well again this time.

On Jan. 23rd the green police came and searched behind sofas and draperies. Here, too, there was for us a "Lo Lanu" (Heb. - Not for us) On Feb. 9th at 10:30 in the morning, 500 green police ordered the evacuation of the center of Tegelen in an hour. But the evacuation was also delayed until February 11th. At 10 o'clock, 150 of these blood hounds came and drove people out of their houses. Of the 1000 men they arrested, they took 350 to Kaldenkirchen from where they luckily could be transported no further since the Allies had bombarded trains and stations so the poor fellows could stay there until they were liberated.

On Feb. 22nd we received 4 more people who had to flee the Germans from a neighboring village. These people had hidden underground for 10 days but could not bear it any longer and so also had to be helped. Fortunately, they brought with them some food so we were helped again.

On Feb. 28th, after a long time came a good report again and it was that the evacuation was cancelled and some people were already returning from Kaldenkirchen. On the same evening we heard that American armored troops were in Kaldenkirchen and thrusting toward Venlo. This report was unbelievable to us and we put no trust in it. Nevertheless, a friend came a few hours later and confirmed the rumor.

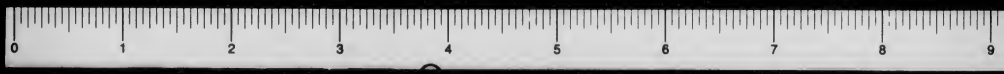
My dears, it is impossible to say what is still to come, we cry with joy and cannot believe that we can still be alive afeer this wait and all these hardships. We believed it first when we saw two trucks of American soldiers on Friday morning. The village was immediately festive, everything draped in bunting and we went out into the street again for the first time as free men.

Now we wanted as quickly as possible to go home although no car or other means of travel was to be had. We wanted to go on foot on Sunday morning. At 4 o'clock on Saturday afternoon the bell rang and a friend of the jeweler P. van der Klei stood at the door with a friend who came to pick us up with his car. You can imagine our joy that we would be able to reach our house so quickly.

On the trip from Tegelen to Geleen we received a small picture of modern war. Bridges blown up, houses and churches destroyed in desolate villages. In Geleen, luckily nothing had occurred and you can imagine the feelings of Mrs. Wolff. She had also not seen her husband in 2-1/2 years.

We slept after a long time again in fresh-made beds, got pure coffee and proper tea and sat again at a set table all of which seemed a fairy tale to us.

Someone had hung a placard on our store window on the day of our liberation which read: "Here was the Baum butcher shop". This notice appeared in various newspapers and was broadcast on English radio. Jull. Gottschalk heard this and wrote to us at our old address. We found this letter when we returned but it must have waited for us for 5 months. As you have read from our letters in the meantime, we still have not been able to re-open the store.



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We also had the great good fortune that we could retrieve most of our things which had been hidden away with friends -- the greater part of the linen and household goods included.

All the Jewish households were plundered by the Germans and the goods sent to Germany. We could recovernone of this.

After the occupation troops who were in our house withdrew. We were able to move in on March 15th. The house was redone from attic to basement at our expense.

We received from the local organization furniture, kitchen and living room and one bedroom. The furniture was temporary and had to be returned after a few weeks. We were lucky that when our dear ones return from Poland, they will find their own homes. We hope and know that you, my dear ones, will help us financially since our capital is used up as we have already written.

In the hope of soon receiving mail from you personally I close for today with best wishes and kisses for all of you.

Yours,

Karl

P.S. Send this letter to Albert since we cannot reach him. By the way, I forgot an important matter. Can you, dear Banno, send me some cigarettes? My best thanks in advance --

Tegelen
August 25, 1944

My Dears,

Today, August 25, 1944, is exactly two years since Leni and Ilse were deported to Poland. Now, just 10 days ago, the second invasion into southern France began and all are counting on a quick end to the war. I will begin to describe to you, my dear ones, our war experiences since war broke out.

From our last letters in 1940, you learned that, thank God, all was going well for us. Father's illness grew steadily worse, so that it became a redemption for him when the dear God called our beloved Father, of blessed memory, to him on October 10, 1940. We grieved deeply at Father's death. Yet, today we take joy in it, since our Father was spared in death all the suffering that our Mother had to live through after that time.

In March, 1940, we paid the rest of our debts for the machinery here in the Netherlands, as well as the electrical refrigeration system. Thus, since we were free from debt, from that time and worked only for profit, the first stage (lit."paw") of our fixed goal had been gained.

Jenni said then, "We just hope now that we have paid for everything, no war comes." With such a pessimism, Max and I always laughed at Jenni since we did not believe that there would be war between Germany and the Netherlands. But it was otherwise, as at a second glance came Friday, May 10, 1940 --a day that we will not forget as long as we live.

That morning at 4 o'clock Jenni came into our room, awakened us saying: "Don't you hear the explosions and the firing?" What can it possibly be?" "Exercises," we answered, turning over to sleep more. A half hour later, however, we heard planes flying quite low. We jumped out of bed and saw the Swastikas on the plane. Then we knew that the Netherlands had been overrun by Germany. We dressed quickly and ran into the street where we heard from acquaintances that the first German tanks and armored (forces) cars had rolled over the **Reiyks Weg** toward Maastricht. A few minutes later, German soldiers came riding out of all the streets and alleys on bicycles with fixed bayonets and hand grenades on a string. When I think back to this sight, I get chills up and down my spine.

The Germans who had settled here welcomed the soldiers jubilantly, while we, naturally, were afraid lest these Germans in exile betray us Jews to the soldiers. Dear Jenni wanted us youngsters to flee on bicycle. Thank God, this came to nothing more, since as we later learned, these refugees were trapped between the two fronts, [a fate which] could not be described in volumes.

At 6 a.m. the Moses family arrived, including the dog, thinking they would be safer with us than in Sittard, since Sittard had immediately been chosen as a military assembly point for the Germans and they were moving German transports through there day and night. The Moses family stayed with us for the first eight days. Until 7 a.m. we still knew nothing [of the fate] of our parents. so we sent Ilse to them to find out what

their situation was. Dear Father sat as always, smoking his cigar at the window, looking out on the endless rows of tanks, armored cars and autos. As Ilse then saw Father, she said that the good old man did not believe that these were truly German soldiers. It was incredible to our dear Father, of blessed memory, because as you all know he was 100% militarist and the criminals had draped their armored cars and automobiles with orange cloth so that everyone thought that they were Netherlands soldiers.

In addition, the soldiers bore placards with the slogan: "Dutchmen, do not fire. We are your friends," attached to their cars and armored vehicles. At 10 o'clock Father came to us and was spechless, to see the Moses family there. No one had any desire to work until Father said: "You are **Meshugge**. Do your duty and work anyway and let it all come to you."

After the people recovered from the first shock, the well-known ever-practical Netherlander appeared and began laying away food like squirrels. Everyone bought everything available and in a few hours on this day we had receipts that would normally equal an entire week's. Whether or not we wanted to, we worked hard in order to fill all the requests. And you can be assured that we struck while the fire was hot.)

Saturday morning at five o'clock, our first 'customers' (lit."famous ones) -- five **Moffensoldaten** bought everything that they saw. One said: "You still have so much meat and sausage, when at home there is no more."

Shops were not only besieged by the populace, but the soldiers received extra pay called **Reichskreditkassenschein**(i.e. government credit slips).

Just before 7 o'clock that evening we viewed our first aerial combat between French and German hunters. By luck there was no damage.

Sunday morning we heard from one of our customers that a Jew of Geleen was arrested by the Germans. Now my dears, you can imagine for yourselves how we felt about this. Every second we thought we would be joining that line. The next day, however, we were told that he was free again. He was accused of having said "Every German soldier who enters my store will be poisoned." The German officer interrogating the Jew was given to understand. He did not believe this slander, and thus the man was set free again.

Later we heard that after the invasion of Holland by the Germans, the resident Germans including the Jews were arrested by the Dutch government. Dear Leni also spent two days in prison, and Jull. Gottschalk and his wife spent five days [there], although all were freed after the surrender of Holland.

After a few weeks, no butcher was allowed to slaughter pigs himself. They were slaughtered in Sittard and parceled out. Beef and veal were still free(i.e. unlimited) and we could buy them from the farmers ourselves. Each week we slaughtered 1 head of cattle and 2 or 3 head of calf which was an especial joy for the parents since it reminded them so much of **Bauchem**. Sorrowfully, we had to work very differently than our Aryan colleagues. They stored away Blockwurst, Rauchfleisch, bacon,

ham, and lard. However, we had to liquidate everything quickly because we had to expect to be closed down at any time.

Later, we still had no limit on sheep and slaughtered 8 - 10 animals a week until all meat as well as other victuals were rationed.

On the fourth Saturday of the occupation, when the store was filled with customers, a junior officer and soldier appeared. In the now-familiar tone, he asked Max: "Are you the proprietor? Then read this through." It was a prohibition for the German army against purchasing from Jews. A sign which he had with him with the notice **"Juedisches Geschaeft"**(Jewish-owned establishment) was to be hung up by Max in the officer's presence. The customers in the store began to laugh aloud and joke about the **Rotmoffen**(Dirty Germans). Someone placed the placard in the window and the net effect was that all the Jewish businesses were busier than ever. All the wretchedness we had left behind in Germany now started over again.

One Friday in December, we were visited by two men in a car. By chance I was alone in the store and, placing themselves in front of the cash register, they asked if I were the propietor and called "Baum." You can well understand that at that moment my heart was in my mouth. (Ich sagte der Lb. Jenni u. dem lb. Max bescheid und ging mit den Herren Kloovem nach oben.) I gave dear Jenni and Max instructions and went upstairs with the **Kelauvim**(Hebrew = dogs).

The salutation was:"Mr. Baum, I await your answer on an affidavit and can arrest you immediately. Your parents emigrated [from Germany] to Holland in [19]38. [They] sold a house and property. Where is that money?"

Answer: "In the Deutschen Bank in Essen."

"A deposit of 8-10,000 marks is missing." To make a long story short, we were alleged to have received money illegally from a peasant. I could prove to him that we paid the costs of emigration for [brother] Albert and ourselves from this account. After some arguing he was temporarily satisfied. In closing he said simply that he would come back again. We never heard anything further of this matter.

In October 1940, Fern was the first of our family to lose her livelihood. In the summer of 1940 they still had many guests and could live for a time from the earnings. From 1941, Jews were barred from all bathing areas. In order to stay alive and pay the daily expenses, Rudi was apprenticed to a machine shop in Maastricht. Fern worked very hard in the worst circumstances in a sand pit. We gave them meat and lard each weekend and dear Jettchen always did a lot or them.

In January 1941, all Jews were required to surrender their radios; luckily we had no radio.

In May, the sports arena in Geleen was struck by a rocket through which every pane of glass in Geleen up to Lindhovel was broken and tiles were blown from many roofs.

Despite great difficulties, Gerta and Max were engaged to be married in May. The religious ceremony took place in Valkenburg. It was in Hannchens apartment and the Moses family, Gerta's parents and we were the guests.We celebrated in accordance with

the times as well and as badly as possible.

After the German invasion of Russia on June 21st, our hopes of a quick end to the war rose. Therefore we were again disappointed by the turn of events.

We received reports from our dear family from Aachen that they had been expelled from their house and forced into barracks. They were permitted to take only the minimal goods with them. Provisions were received only in restricted amounts. Jews did not receive meat, cereal and fat at all and we sent packages right away which all fortunately arrived.

At the same time we received a report that the first Jewish deportation transport began. Luckily our family were not among the first. I will spare the description of the different parting notes that we received from our dear ones. Therefore we still did not think that the same fate awaited us. In the meantime, the Gestapo were not idle here.

One day in the summer of [19]41, they picked up all Jewish-looking men in the streets of Amsterdam and shipped them off to Mathausen. There these poor fellows worked in a Mercury mine in the worst circumstances and their poor relatives received death notices daily.

A three-day strike in Amsterdam protesting this, unique in the world's history, that people struck for their oppressed Jewish neighbors, was put down by the German police and Gestapo in the most brutal manner of the underworld, and many brave Netherlanders gave their lives since the thugs did not look back at those they had killed.

We lived after that with growing dread as the Germans took ground on all fronts and grew more brazen and regular in their appearances daily.

Our emigration papers came too late, so that despite all our efforts nothing availed, since the American consulate had been closed in the meantime.

In May 1942, our business was closed even as the other Jewish businesses had been closed in November 1941.

I was able to work as a journey-man for a colleague to whom we sent our customers. Max went to work for a farmer and received for that foods that were no longer available on rations.

In May 1942, we were also required to wear a Jewish star on the left side of our chest - a big, yellow, six-pointd Star of David on which was written **Jood**. We first had to wear the Star on Sundays, and what was the outcome?

Leni came from Maastricht that morning and explained that she was greeted by all those she passed --even strangers. At noon Max and I went to Wolff's in Geleen -- who is a cousin of Benno Wolff's wife. Mr. Wolff used to be a [sales] representative of the Rollman family and Rose Kohn.

Our experience was just as Leni had told. We were greeted by both those we knew and strangers. When we got on a train or trolley or bus, people stood to give us seats. Later, Jews were only permitted to travel 3km. and then board only after all the others were seated.

On June 30, there were further new restrictions. These ordinances were so harsh that many Jews committed suicide. I will

include one of these decrees which were allegedly given to keep public law and order:

1. From 8pm to 6 am Jews must remain in their houses.
2. A Jew is forbidden to enter private houses or private establishments.
3. Jews may go into shops only between 3 and 5 pm.
4. Jews may not enter any beauty or barber shop.
5. Jews may not travel, even on trolleys or buses.
6. Jews were excluded from almost all occupations and immediately dismissed, etc., etc.

A few weeks later our bicycles were confiscated, bicycle riding forbidden and one other [which is that] a Jew who was found riding a bicycle would be harshly punished.

Between May and June 1942, we were required by the Jewish Council in Amsterdam,the so-called official Jewish authority, and which alone could act in connection with the Dutch or German administrative authorities, to complete a questionnaire of no less than 200 questions and through this list every one knew if you'll excuse my saying so, when anyone last went to the toilet.

We were required to return this questionnaire in person to the Gestapo and that was until that time, the most nerve-wracking experience of my life, so I was happy and lucky to leave that house again. The lists were allegedly filled out for emigration purposes, but shortly thereafter we were called to the Gestapo and had to offer tax scrip which had been received for the payment of an exit tax.

At this time, I visited the family of E. Klein for the last time and have heard nothing more from them since.

In May 1942, came the first great English air strike on Cologne, with 1000 bombers. We all counted on a quick liberation but again our hopes were false. A visitor to the Wolffs from Cologne said: "It is no longer Cologne-on-Rhine, rather Cologne-on-Ash."

In July 1942, the deportation of the Jews to Poland from Holland began, and Reni Kaufman,the sister of Gerta, was in the first transport.

On August 22, the notice arrived that Leni and Ilse were to report to the local police on the 25th, where the Jews assembled for the trip by bus to Maastricht, and from there via Westerborg to Poland. It is very hard for me to write of this even though we expected this, even all to be sent together. Between the call-up and assembly, the houses where these Jews lived were guarded by the S.A. Nevertheless, many Jews took flight in order to hide.

Our dear children proved themselves very strong and courageous, lessening the harshness of Jenni's departure. Max and I took the children to the Jewish Community House. What occurred [t]here cannot be described in words. Of the 40 Jews who had

nearly too heavy for them to lift. Women with children of 2 years, old men, invalids, sat here; parents took leave of their children,and children bade farewell to their parents.How Jenni endured all this I still do not know. Can I explain to you how it feels (to see) children torn away from their mothers? They were the last and only possession that Jenni still had. It is now more than two and one half years, yet we have heard nothing more from her.

Hannchen, Fern and Rudi were also deported in this group from Volkenburg. And from there, too, we have heard nothing more.

One day later, Max and I received a call for the work-service muster.

An acquaintance of Ilse with whom we regrettably became close too late, provided a **Schuilplatz** for me. I remained there alone and Max was at the Jewish Council in Geleen, until I was hidden on Sept. 8, 1942. Mother's departure was very hard on me, since I did not know what further had happened to the others.

Before the second call-up, many Jews were hidden by good Dutch. In the mean time, the Germans arrested again all previous officers and soldiers as POWs and because many of these and also of those young people who were to be sent to Germany for hard labor were hidden away, the underground organization [had under its protection] about 300,000 men . [They] had much work to do in order to provide these people with food ration cards, since it was impossible to feed two people with the small amount of food allotted to each person.

We received for example, a weekly allottment of 125 gr. of meat with bones, 125 gr, butter, 70 gr. peas, 3 kg. potatoes, 1 kg. bread, etc. per person. The ration cards needed for the so-called **Onderduiker** were automatically stolen by the well-organized and armed patriots of the various districts. Many were also provided with false identification from the captured who had been killed by the NSB. We, too, were provided with identification cards.

Through the intervention of my present landlord, who is an agent by trade, I always received reports from the family. Thus I learned on November 3, 1942, that the family from Sittard were deported along with many others. They had the great good fortune to be taken into the 'old guard' where they were accountable to Fritz Gottschalk and his wife from Geilenkirchen, so that until today, 28 August 1944, they remain at Westerborg in Holland.

On the 28th of September 1942, I received company, and Mr. Wolff from Geleen, with whom we were friends also came here. Mr. Wolff was married to an Aryan, which was our good fortune.

On October 25, 1942, Geleen was heavily bombarded through an error that others cannot explain to us. More than 100 were killed and over 500 houses destroyed. I heard this the next day and thank God that my own were not killed. Fortunately,we had stored

as much clothing and linen as possible just before at [the house of] Good Dutch. Unfortunately, the house with the earthen floor was also destroyed so that we lost everything except a few valuables which were stored in the cellar.

On April 1, 1943, a new regulation appeared in the newspapers ordering all Jews from all provinces to report to the Concentration Camp at Vught on April 10.

What this meant, especially for Mother, you can well imagine for yourselves. Since she could not bear such hardship, our house doctor certified that she could not be transported. The Gestapo did recognize such mercy and pity, so that mother was sent away with Gerda and Max. Jenny was still able to flee through the help of Good Dutch and so also came to me.

In Sittard, Max and Gerda were again pulled from the car by the Gestapo and brought to Maastricht. Here women and men were already separated. In Maastricht the bloodhounds wanted to know from them where Jenni had hidden. Naturally, they knew nothing, and so they were released after two days of torture and had to go to Vught alone, without guard, which they did. This we just learned now. We don't undertand it, but we hear from Mrs. Wolff,that Max had always said that he did not wish to leave Mother alone. He could not help her, however, since men and women were already separated in Sittard.

Our dear ones remained in Vught only a few weeks before being transported to Westerborg. Dear Mother had to be taken to the hospital there anyway, as she suffered a complete nervous breakdown.

Here it was our dear Mrs. Wolff who supplied Mother with a food parcel. In addition to this, in Vught, everything-- <u>everything</u>-- except what they wore was stolen. So there also Mrs. Wolff had to supply clothing for them which was an indescribably difficult task after three years at war.

Every type of goods except salt, **vim** and **ata** (trade names for commodities of the simplest kind) were rationed. Yard goods were simply not to be acquired at all.

On the black market, there are naturally goods to buy, but for prices that are astronomical, for example:

item	was	black market
1 kg. butter	2.60 fl	60.-fl
1 kg. potatoes	.08	1.50
pkg. cigarettes	.25	10.-
1 cigar	.06	4.-
palmolive soap	.125	12.-
1 kg. meat	2.-	30.-
bicycle tire	3.50	175.-
1 kg. coffee	1.60	400.-
1 suit	65.-	1000.-

In June 1943, many Dutch who were by chance riding their

bicycles had them confiscated, and 14 days later they were required to turn in their radios. Naturally, many radios were not turned in and thus followed, much trouble. Fortunately, the people who sheltered us had a second radio so that at least we heard the English, American and Russian broadcasts. During the heaviest bombings, when one bomb hit the whole residential district, it was forbidden to hear radio broadcasts, so this was done secretly.

But on Sept. 8, 1943, at 8:45 pm, when Radio London announced that Italy had surrendered, all Holland knew two minutes later!

As for us, we had to pay the people with whom we were hidden. We paid 20 florins a week, altogether a small price, and we sold our valuables which were saved from the bombardments.

A sporting companion from Berlin, also an old fighting companion of DER had an important position, and he was able to keep our dear ones [at Westerborg] until Sept. 9, 1943, when they were deported to Poland. In December, 1943, we received a letter from Max sent from Warsaw through Mrs. Wolff, which the poor fellow wrote, again needing warm clothing and food. Mrs. Wolff was able, with help from our friends (especially Noll, whom you surely know), to send more packages. We never received a return receipt from Max.

Early January, 1944, we heard only that the invaders had also deported Mother to Poland, and we have also heard nothing more of her.

Until now, late August, the Moses family is still in Westerborg. Kurt temporarily as a carpenter in Zeist and it is also our friend Mrs. Wolff who is in correspondence and still sends food packages.

On September 8, I will have been here exactly two years without setting foot in the street. If someone had suggested this to me before,, I would have directly announced that I could not bear it, but as you can see, all things are possible.

Even my suit, which I haven't had off my body for two years goes along --one wears it shiny. We even live in 'shining' conditions.

I could write thick books about our lives here,although this would go too far and I hope that I can explain this to you, my dears, by mouth. We sleep much, read more, play cards now and then, and we have learned, thank God, to speak very good Dutch and also some writing. Sadly we could not learn English since we muist live very quietly and a Gestapo lives next door.

We live in Tegelen near Venlo; here there is an enormous airport for Western Europe. The airport is bombed now and again by American and English planes, and when we hear the whistle of the 4000kg bombs, then you can imagine the anxiety! Outside this, all the Amrerican and English planes which bomb the Ruhr region return ovr us and this is espeically hard for Jenni since she suffered the force of the bombing in Geleen on Oct. 15, 1942, and one never forgets an experience like this in a lifetime.

It is naturally very interesting to se when the hunters take off to pursue the bombers and fire upon them. But the interest pales before the danger, which is very great since most times a

hunter or bomber is brought down. Then, when they fall, no stone remains standing on another, and frequently houses have been reduced to rubble in this way.

We live with Catholic people, and during these moments the prayers "beloved is Jesus Christ" and "**Shema Yisraeil**" are on the lips of each of us.

There is good out of this evil; Jenni frequently has trouble going to a known place (i.e. defecating). However, when the fliers come through it works like a well-oiled machine.

So we remain here and wait with growing yearning for the long-expected liberation, and for our dear ones from Poland.

On August 23, Radio London reported that Paris had fallen, and on the next day we heard that Rumania had surrendered and begun to fight with the Allies. On Sept. 4, Brussels was liberated and on Sept. 8, Finland laid down arms; Also on Sept. 8, Bulgaria declared war against Germany. Here we see only German soldiers retreating on the roads.

Our next door neighbors, dirty Germans, ran out of their house in flight on Sept. 4, at 4 am after giving away their entire household.

We transformed our sadness into indescribable joy and thought we would be liberated no more than 4 or 5 days later. Sadly, however, our joy was too early.

My dears, the three months September, October and November[1944] were for all of us the time of greatest tension that a person can bear. Now watching out for the liberation was not our most pressing concern, but Russia, so that my friend Wolff and I had to be alert day and night in an unheated room. In addition we got no more fat to eat so we have been lucky only to have rheumatism in the arms from this.

On Sept. 17, the German railway officials suddenly descended seeking quarters on our right and on our left; they also asked our landlord for shelter, but he was quick-witted enough to say that he had six children and not even room enough for them. Trains for civilians were halted and we had heard nothing from Mrs. Wolff since Sept. 2nd. After Sept.18th, we also received no electrical current, and [this was] even worse for us because then we could not listen to the radio, and had to depend on rumors to know whether or not Geleen was liberated. Newspapers appeared no more since we were cut off in a sector of 40-50 kilometers from the south, north and west, and only the east - Germany - was open to us.

Later, there appeared a local newspaper in Venlo which, however, had to be brought daily [at great personal risk] since all men from the age 16 to 60 years were under orders for hard labor. Since almost no Dutch men assembled, men were simply taken from the street to build trenches if they had no work permits.

Besides this, a few times a week, all the male and female bicyclists were simply grabbed off the streets.

Suddenly, a new danger appeared when thousands of Polish,

Russian, Ukranian and German men and women came here to build fortifications and were in part billeted in private houses. Here, too, we got away lightly.

Venlo was heavily bombarded on October 28th and 29th, with the result that we were without water for a few days. The German police and German Administrative Authority including the Party had complete power after Nov. 11th, since all the good Netherlander among the City and Railway officials, including the mayor and police disappeared, so a network had to be called into life which could warn all those in hiding against a possible raid. Thanks to cooperation, it all went like clock work. Everyone knew something was up almost before it began. There were also, naturally, many false alarms, so that on Nov. 2nd when the first real raid took place it was a great failure for the Germans.

We also had a separate hiding place in our house, which placed us literally over the heads of the Germans when they came. After 4 hours the raid was over and we outsmarted the criminals, thank God, this time. On Nov. 4th, Venlo again was bombarded very heavily so that the inner city lay in dust and ashes and the newspaper could no longer appear.

In the mean time, the Allied broadcasts from Eindhoven went into operation. Two Dutch patriots made the broadcasts middays and evenings under the name of **Snoeki** so that we were again able to follow the progress on the fronts. We heard that the Americans had freed the provinces of Zeeland and North Brabant from the enemy. When the Islands of Walchun and Zuid Burland, which guarded the port of Antwerp were finally in Allied hands, we knew that our freedom would soon arrive, but our patience was being well tested. By the way, at this time, two patriots went into a hotel where the Germans were quartered {mit einem kleinen Pfil. Apar.} with a small recording device. They used current from Germany.

On Nov. 10th there was another raid which lasted 12 hours. We survived this, too.

The German party bigwigs in their yellow uniforms were very numerous and no factory or business, even the smallest, was spared their visit; all, absolutely all, was stolen legally[sic]-- through proclamation, decrees, etc. Horses, cows, cars, equipment, machinery, food, rugs, curtains -everything-<u>absolutely everything</u> -these pigs took. Ironically, if we left it here, it would surely be bombed by the Americans or English and we can use these things well!

The German family that lived next door to us also came back a few days later with a huge furniture truck and took back all they had given away. The woman even brought a list so that nothing was forgottten. We all hoped that for these barbarians all Germany will be bombed out.

Naturally, we could no longer receive ration cards from our friend Mrs. Wolff, but this difficulty also passed quickly since the director of the distribution gave us our entitlement regularly. Our rations were reduced from week to week and finally we received only 3/4 of a loaf of bread each week on this certificate. Potatoes disappeared 14 days ago. Then the farmers

whose land lay directly on the Maas were evacuated and all their potatoes confiscated by the Germans. Our horde is already long exhausted and we received 50 kg from close acquaintances. If we are not freed by [the time these are used up] we do not know what we will do.

For us men, the most difficult is that we have nothing to smoke, and neither with money nor good words, could cigarettes or cigars be procured. A good neighbor - a non-smoker - had saved up a few smokes and from him we received **rookertjes** and when his supply was exhausted, he supplied us with tobacco leaves from his garden. In order to smoke one cigarette we need 10 - 12 matches and the taste "stank us out of house and home ('er erreichte den Hof mit Mich und not.')."

During the night of November 12-13,there was a terrible din of soldier filled cars coming and going on our street,and we saw in the morning that the soldiers were setting up a battery of field and anti-aircraft artillery behind our house on a hockey field. Twenty four hours later the first salvo of the 8.8 cannons thundered. It was a hullaballoo as if the world would end, and our house shook in its path. At first the soldiers only fired at airplanes, but later also to the front. The Allied offensive had begun on Nov,16th, and since the middle of October we had been able to see the beacons of the Allied forces across the sky. In the house next to us, where the Germans lived earlier, the staff of the battery made its nest and the telephone circuits for them were laid in our garden. Also, all our furnishings had been moved into the cellar in the mean time, and we knew that we needed [to do] his when there was an artillery battle on Nov. 17th that lasted from 8:15 pm to 10:45 pm. There was no thought of sleeping that night. Our first work of the next day was to move the beds into the cellar, and since that night we have been living in the cellar --sleeping and eating in the cellar, and except for grabbing some fresh air or using the wc we stayed in the cellar all the time. Only my friend Wolff and I exchange places every two hours, since someone always has to be upstairs on the lookout for any possbile raids. Here one needn't speak of the proverbial "Jewish fear" and my friend Wolff, especially, since he never played any sport except C.H.(?), proved to be a man.

Only our landlord had too much fear of the fire bombs to come out of the cellar. Note well that our hiding place during raids lay between the rafters and the wood ceiling so that when grenades fly over us and explode around us we often have the feeling that the house is going to collapse because of the air pressure and we will be buried in the rubble. As soon as the raid is over, when we come out of the hiding places, the first thing we do is thank our God that we have survived again.

On the 21st in the afternoon about 17:15(i.e. 5:15pm), a sergeant came to us demanding billeting for himself and three men. "If you don't give us the room as requested, then we will take the whole house," -- that was his opening remark. The soldiers began to take over immediately and after a half hour they were in place and immediately began to lay telephone wires, when the order came "We withdraw!" By 17:45 (i.e. 5:45pm) we were

again our own masters in our own house. A soldier said to the landlord: "Be happy that we retreat, since otherwise ill would have come here.The Allies fire heavily. This is the sixth time in 14 days that as soon as we have set up the artillery we have had to retreat further."

And that that soldier was absolutely correct was proven to us personally the next day. On Nov. 21st the battery was gone. We breathed freely.The restoration of quiet was the best medicine for our nerves. Nov. 22nd was a fine November day. The rain clouds hung low. Neither airplanes nor clearing were in the air. It was all quiet. The front was still 4km across the Maas. At 8 that evening, just as we were ready to go to bed (since we had no electric light and had to use short candles and torches we went to sleep with the chickens), the house shook when a bomb must have landed a short distance from us. Three or four seconds later, a new explosion came and we heard the crash of roof and chime of breaking glass. Each one of us pleaded with God for help in most desparate fashion. No one knew how much damage had been done and no one had the courage to go into the street. Only an hour later did we go through the house -- often walking on shards of glass. We could not light a light since our blackout shades were blown away. The next morning we saw the destruction. The house immediately to the left of ours had sustained a direct hit with a bomb which had left a crater to the depth of the first storey. The street in front of us and our neighbor opposite also had been hit. Behind us, less than 2 meters from the place where just the day before the cannons had stood, a bulls-eye hit left its mark at the former munitions storage for this cannon. A miracle? Who knows. Our lives lay in God's hand who cared for and protected us.

We have become [residents of] no-man's land; since Nov. 23rd Allied and German artillery shells fly back and forth over us. We hear the firing and the explosions, and in between, the flight of the rockets.

Since the 23rd [the Allies] reached the Maas, 1 km behind us, and since the 24th, they reached the Maas at Venlo, 4km away from us. How much longer we still have to wait for our liberation, we still watch. I am writing this letter on Nov. 29 and will, with God's help, finish at home.

The party bigwigs and railroaders are gone since yesterday. Today the soldiers have been busy stealing the switches and other railroad equipment and we are still bound hand and foot.

Although we often planned to flee behind the lines to our house, no one will take the risk now.

I forgot to mention that on Nov. 23rd our hair was barbered for the first time in two years and three months,and this, too, was a great joy for us. Now I appear human again and if the Allies come quickly, then we can at least travel the 50 km to Geleen without attracting attention.

An electrician, a friend of the family, showed us on Nov. 23rd that we can indeed receive radio broadcasts, since if we connect a few wires in the electrical box, the current, intended for the German soldiers, flows from Kaldenkirchen. We, too, [now] hear radio with German current. Can you think of anything

better? Since Nov. 17th, we have not been out of our clothes night or day, since we must expect a raid at any moment. Our own grocery hordes were exhausted in mid-September. We eat enough to live of dried bread and "Moses-soup" -- drawn out of the water. Apple butter spread very thin is a treat for us. Dear Jenni traded two bed sheets for 1-1/2 kg of bacon.

My dears, what we have endured since mid-September is not be described in words. Our landlord has been made 3/4 crazy through all this and cannot be dealt with any more. The excitement of raids, billeting and possible evacuation is not to be described. Everyone is completely unnnerved and even sick. Just believe me, that I do not exaggerate, the naked truth is much worse than all our loss is great.

Today, Dec. 2nd, I continue my report. We still remain under the yoke of the Germans and our lives grow more unbearable day by day. For all our sustenance we have received since Nov. 27th only half a bread per person per week. We get potatoes now and then from friends who are depleting their own stores. In addition we are bombarded daily by the English and our fears grow over our ability to survive the war. Friday, Nov. 24th, we had a peaceful day on which we heard no more bombs and already believed that the shelling had stopped in our sector, and we found new courage. Saturday, Nov. 25th was also quiet in the morning. We were all above -- that is one the ground floor. Suddenly at 11:40[am] there began great explosions: one, another one, and again and again, with an unbelievable noise. We dropped to the floor and crawled on all fours to the cellar steps. After a few minutes, we returned to the ground floor where a frightening sight greeted our eyes. A bomb had landed right in front of our house and had bored a deep hole in the street. Three steps away from us lay a teamster and his horse, dead, torn by shrapnel.

Ten steps to the left lay another corpse, half of whose abdomen had been torn away by shrapnel. Naturally all the houses around were more or less damaged, but this destruction is nothing compared with the loss of life. At the home of a good friend of ours, a bomb exploded in the kitchen where the house wife was just working; when her son saw the exterior walls collapsing, he threw her to the floor, laid a chair over the poor old lady, and pulled her that way under the rubble. Only through God's hand mother and son escaped with just a few skin wounds. I know one thing -- if I survive this war, I will never forget this November 25th. Since that day there have been many rumors. Different villages around us have been orderd by the Nazis to evacuate, since most of people are searching for their safety in flight and find a new home in Tegelen. Naturally, the Nazis heard about this and between Nov. 27th and 29th more than 300 SS were here making raids and more than 200 people fell thus into the hands of these bloodhounds and were transported to Germany. Our nerves were completely tested by this and we thank God that the louts did not find us. So it went from week to week. On December 23rd we received the order that we must evacuate. We had 1-1/2 hours to pack everything up. Everyone made preparations. My friend Wolff and I were still not going to leave, and made a hole under the floor where there was no cellar, and stowed all the food we

had there. The greatest problem was naturally water. The water suppply had stopped and water had to be brought by acquaintances from the pump. So we filled bottles with water and stowed these too, in our hiding place. By three o'clock, we still heard nothing. Finally at 5pm the report came that the evacuation was delayed 14 days. What this meant to us you cannot imagine. We said that with time all would be won.

On Christmas, we stayed in the cellar. The same day we had made slaw from sugar beets so we had something to put on our bread for Christmas Day.

In the first week of January, 1945, 90 infants died of malnutrition. On Jan. 4th, Venlo had to evacuate officially and Tegelen in a few days. Luckily, the evacuation of Tegelen was only rumored. On Jan. 16th, we heard that an Allied offensive had begun near Littard (sic) [=Sittard] and we found courage again that only a few days were required before we would be liberated. How great was our disappointment when we heard that the troops were still laying outside Roermond and again we would not be liberated. Thus there were two raids the next day -- at 10 in the morning and in the evening at 6. We just sat down for the evening meal --we had whole potatoes and carrots for the first time - a holiday meal for us -- when there was a knock at the door and the command called:"Open at once!" Wolff and I ran up the stairs without hesitation and had to climb over the rafters in the dark to reach our hiding place, creeping on hands and feet. But with God's help, we came out well again this time.

On Jan. 23rd the green police came and searched behind sofas and draperies. Here too, there was a **lo lanu** [Hebrew = not for us]for us. On Feb. 9th at 10:30 in the morning, 500 green police ordered the evacuation of the center of Tegelen in an hour. But the evacuation was also delayed until February 11th. At 10 o'clock, 150 of these bloodhounds came and drove people out of their houses. Of the 1000 men they arrested, they took 350 to Kaldenkirchen from where they luckily could be transported no further, since the Allies had bombarded trains and stations so the poor fellows could stay there until they were liberated.

On February 22nd we received 4 more people [in our house] who had to flee the Germans from a neighboring village. these people had hidden underground for 10 days but could not bear it any longer, and so also had to be helped. Fortunately, they brought some food with them, so we were helped again.

On Feb. 28th, ,a good report came again after a long time, and [it] was that the evacuation was cancelled and some people were already returning from Kaldenkirchen. On the same evening,we heard that American armored troops were in Kaldenkirchen and thrusting toward Venlo. This report was unvbelievable to us and we put no trust in it. Nevertheless, a friend came a few hours later and confirmed the rumor.

My dears it is impossible to say what is still to come. We cry with joy and cannot believe that we can still be alive after this wait and all these hardships. We believed it first when we saw two trucks of American soldiers on Friday morning. The village was immediately festive, everything draped in bunting and we went out into the street again for the first time as free men.

Now we wanted to go home as quickly as possbile, although no car or other means of transportation was to be had. We wanted to go on foot on Sunday morning. At 4 o'clock on Saturday afternoon the bell rang and a friend of the jeweler P. van der Klei stood at the door with a friend who came to pick us up in his car. You can imagine our joy that we would be able to reach our house so quickly.

On the trip from Tegelen to Geleen we received a small picture of modern war. Bridges blown up, houses and churches destroyed in desolate villages. In Geleen, luckily nothing had occurred and you can imagine the feelings of Mrs. Wolff. She had not seen her husband in 2-1/2 years.

After a long time, we slept again in fresh-made beds, got pure coffee and proper tea and sat again at a set table, all of which seemed a fairy-tale to us.

Someone had hung a placard on our store window on the day of our liberation which read: "Here was the Baum butcher shop." This notice appeared in various newspapers and was broadcast on English radio. Jull. Gottschalk heard this and wrote to us at our old address. We found this letter when we returned, but it must have waited for us for five months. As you have read from our letters in the meantime, we still have not been able to re-open the store.

We also had the great good fortune that we could retrieve most of our things which had been hidden away with friends -- the greater part of the linen and household goods included.

All the Jewish households were plundered by the Germans and the goods sent to Germany. We could recover none of this.

After the occupation troops who were in our house withdrew, we were able to move in on March 15th. The house was redone from attic to basement at our expense.

We received furniture for the kitchen, living room and one bedroom from the local organization. The furniture was temporary and had to be returned after a few weeks. We were lucky that when our dear ones return from Poland, they will find their own homes. We hope and know that you, my dear ones, will help us financially since our capital is used up as we have already written.

In hope of soon receiving mail from you personally I close for today with best wishes and kisses for all of you.

Yours,
Karl

P.S. Send this letter to Albert, since we cannot reach him. By the way, I forgot an important matter. Can you, dear Benno, send me some cigarettes? My best thanks in advance --

Tegelen, 25. Aug. 19.44

Meine Lieben;

Heute am 25 Aug. 1944 sid es genau 2 Jahre,dass die lb. Geschw. I. Ilse nach Polen verschikt worden sind. Jetzt nachdem vor 10 Tagen die zweite Inasion in Sudfrankr. begonnen hat und ein jeder mit einem schnellen Kriegs - ende rechnet,will ich beginnen Euch meine Lieben unsere Kriegserlebnisse seit Kriegsausbruch zu schildern.

Aus unseren letzten Briefen von 1940 habt Ihr ersehen,dass es uns [illegible] Gottlob allen recht gut ging.Die Krankheit des lb. Vater sel. griff immer [illegible] sich, sodass es besonderst fur ihm eine Erlosung war,als der lb Gott den lb. Vaters sel.Aber heute sind wir froh daruber,dass unser lb. Vater damals gestorben ist,denn dadurch ist ihm all das Elend dass auch unsere lb. Mutter seit der Zeit mit machen musste erspart geblieben.

Im Marz 1940 hatten wir den Rest unserer Schulden fur die hier in Holland Maschienen u. die elktr. Kuhlzelle bezahlt.Dadurch,dass wir von diesem Zeitpunkt ab Schuldenfrei waren und wir nun mit Gewinn arbeiteten,hatten wir die erste Etappe des uns gestellten Zieles erreicht.

Die lb. Jennj sagte damals:;Wir wollen hoffen,dass jetzt,wo wir alles bez. haben kein Krieg kommt."Bei der artiger Schwarzseherei haben der lb. Max und ich die lb. Jennj immer ausgelacht,da wir an einen Krieg zwischen Deutschl. u. Holland nie glaubten.Aber erstens kam es anders,zweiten als wir dachten und Freitag den 10. Mei 1940 werden wir nie in unserem Leben vergessen.

Morgens um 4 Uhr kam die lb. Jennj zu uns auf dem Zimmer,macht uns wach und sagte:;Hort ihr nicht die Explosionen und die Schiesserein,was kann das sein?Ubungen "sagten wir drehten uns um und schliefen weiter.Eine halbe Stunde spater horten wir jedoch sehr niedrig fliegende Flugzeuge. Wir sprangen aus den Betten und sahen an den Flugzeugen das Hakenkreuz.Nun wussten wir Nederl. ist von Deutschl. uberfallen worden.Wir zogen uns schnell an rannten auf die Strasse und horten dann von Bekannten,dass die ersten Deutsch. Tanks u. Panzer uber den Reiksweg nach Maastricht rollten.Ein paar Minuten spater kamen aus allen Strassen u. Gassen radfahrende Deutsche Soldaten mit aufgeflanztem Seitengewehr u. Handgranaten en doppel an.Wenn ich an diesen Augenblick zuruck denke,lauft es mir kalt u. heiss den Rucken herrunter.

Die hier ansassigen Deutsch. empfingen die Soldaten mit grossem Jubel und wir hatten naturlich Angst,dass diese Auslandsdeutsche uns Juden an den Soldaten verraten wurden.Die lb. Jennj wollte,dass wir Jungens auf Fahrrader fluchten sollten.Gott sei dank ging es aber nicht mehr,denn dass, was die Fluchtlinge, wie wir spater horten mitgemacht haben,da sie zwischen 2 Fronten zu liegen kamen, ist selbst in Buchern nicht zu beschreiben.

Um 6 Uhr Morgens kam Faml. Moses einschl. Hund zu uns und dachten bei uns sicherer zu sein als in Sittard,da Sittard sofort als militarischer Versammelplatz von den Deutschen ausgesucht war und durch Sittard,Tag u. Nacht die Deutschen Truppen zogen. Faml. Moses blieb dann auch die ersten 8 Tagen bei uns. Bis 7 Uhr Morgens wussten wir von den lb. Eltern noch nichts und deshalb schickte ich die lb. Ilse zu ihnen um zu horen,wie die lb. Eltern den Zustand ansahen. Der lb. Vater sel. sass wie immer mit seiner Zigarre am Fenster und schaute auf die Reihen endloser Tanks,Panzer u.Autos herrab.Wie die lb. Ilse nun dem lb.Vater sa

1 [illegible] sel.sagte,dass seiner Deutsche Soldaten wollte der lb. gute alte Mann dies
2 nicht glauben. Es war aber auch fur unsern lb. Vater sel. der ja wie Ihr alle wisst ein 100% Militarist gewesen ist unglaublich,da die Verbrecher ihre Panzer u. Autos mit oranje Tucher bespannt hatten so dass ein jeder glaubte mit nederl. Soldaten zu tun zu haben. Ausserdem natten die Soldaten Plakaten mit der Aufschrift: „Hollander schiesst nicht Wir sind eure Freunde vor ihre Autos u. Panzer gespannt. Um 10 Uhr kam denn der lb. sel. zu uns und war sprachlos Faml. Moses bei uns zu sehen. Keiner hatte Lust zu arbeiten bis dass der lb Vater sel sagte:, Ihr seit Meschugge tut euer Pflicht u. Arbeitet wie sonst u. lasst alles an euch
2/27/84 herran kommen!

Nachdem sich die Menschen vom ersten Schrecken erholt hatten,kam der uberall so bekannte nuchterne Nederlander zum Vorschein und die grosse Hamsterei begann. Ein jeder kaufte was zu kaufen war u. in ein paar Stunden dieses Tages hatten wir eine Kasse die sonst einer Wocheneinnahme gleich stand. Ob wir wollten oder nicht wir mussten schwer arbeiten um alle Anforderungen gerecht zu werden,und ihr konnt Euch darauf verlassen,wir schmiededen das Eisen so lang es warm war.

Samstags orgens um 5 Uhr waren unsere ersten Kunden 5 Moffen [illegible] sel. die meinten alles was sie sahen.Einer sagte:, Was habt Ihr nich viel Fleisch [illegible] so etwas gibt beiuns gar nicht mehr." Die Geschafte wurden nicht nur von der Bevolkerung sondern auch von den Soldaten bestürmt.Die Soldaten erhielten extra Geld sog.Reichskreditkassenscheine.

Abend gegen 7 Uhr bekamen wir unser erstes Luftgefacht zwischen franzosichen u. deutschen Jagern zu sehen. Zum Gluck entstand kein schaden.

-geferet: aerial combat

Sonntags Morgens horten wir von einem Kunden,dass ein judischer Herr aus Geleen von den Deutschen verhaftet sei.Nun meine Lieben könnt Ihr Euch ja vorstellen wie es uns zu Mute war.Jeden Augenblick dachten wir, jetzt sind wir an der Reihe. Gegen Tag wurde uns jedoch gesagt,dass der Herr wieder frei sei. Selbiger war beschuldigt gesagt zu haben:Jeder Deutsch. Soldat der meinen Laden betritt wird von mir vergiftigt".Der Deutsch. Offiezier der den Juden verhörte, gab zu verstehen:,Er glaubte diese Redereien nicht"und so kam der Herr wieder frei.

Später horten wir,dass nach dem Einfall der Deutschen in Holland ansassige Deutsche einschl. Juden von den holld. Behorden verhaftet wurden. Die lb. Leni hatt auch 2 Tage fest gesessen. Jull. Gottschalk m. Frau 5 Tage aber alle wurden nach der Kapietaldidation Hollands in Freiheit gestellt.

Nach einigen Wochen durfte kein Metzger mehr Schweine selbst schlachten und wurden dieselben in Sittard geschlachtet u. prozentual verteilt.Rindfleisch u. Kalbfleisch war noch frei u. konnten wir diese selbst beim Bauern einkaufen. Wir schlachteten pro Woche 1 Stuck Grohsvieh u. 2/3 Kalber und war dies für die lb. Eltern eine besondere Freude,weil es so viel an Bauchem erinerte.Leider mussten wir ganz anders arbeiten wie unsere arischen Kollegen. Diese arbeiteten Blockwurst,

Blockwurst,Rauchfleisch, Speck, Schinken u. Fett auf Vorrat.Wir jedoch mussten alles schnell zu Geld machen da wirjede Woche mit einer Geschaftsschliessung rechnen muhsten. Spater waren nur noch Schafe frei und schlachteten wir 8 /4o Stuck per Woche bis die ganze Fleischversorgung auch alle andere Lebensmittel auf Karten kam.

Am vierten Samsta, der Besetzung erschien Nachmittags der Laden stand voller Kunden einterofz. mit einem Soldaten. In dem Euch ja bekannten Ton frugxer Max: ‚Sind sie der Inhaber";dann lesen sie sich dieses Schreiben mal durch!" Es war ein Verbot fur die Deutsche Wehrmacht um bei Juden zu kaufen.Ein Schild welches er bei sich hatte mit der Aufschrift:;Judisches Geschaft" musste Max in seinem Beisein aufhangen. Die Kunden im Laden begonnen laut zu lachen und auf die rotmoffen(dreckige Deutsche) zu schimpfen.Ein jeder las das Plakat im Fenster und der Knalleffekt war der,dass alle judischen Geschaften so viel zu tun erhielten wie nie zu vor.Alle Miesigkeiten die wir glaupten in Deutschl. hinter uns gelassen zu haben begonnen nun von vorne.

An einem Freitag im Dez. bekamen wir Besuch von 2 Herren im Auto.Zufallig war ich allein im Laden und stellten sich vor von der Zollfandungstelle frugen: ;ob ich der Inhaber sei und Baum hiesse." Das mir im Augenblick die Buxse mit Grundeis ging konnt ihr Euch ja, meine Lieben vorstellen. Ich sagte der lb. Jenni u. dem lb. Max bescheid und ging mit den Herren Kloovem nach oben.

Die Begrussung war;;Herr Baum ich verlange von Ihnen Antworten an Eidesstatt u.kann ich sie sofort verhaften.";Ihre Eltern sind nach Holland ausgewand. haben Haus u. Land verkauft wo ist das Geld?

Antwort: Bei der Deutschen Bank in Essen."

Da fehlt ein Betrag von 8 /looooMk.Der langen Rede kurzen Sinn war,wir sollten von einem Bauer illegal Geld erhalten haben.Ich konnte ihnen beweisen,dass wir unsere u. dem lb. Alberts Auswanderung hiervon bezahlt hatten.Nach vielem hin u. her gaben sie sich vorlaufig zu frieden. Zum Abschied sagte er nur,dass er nochmals zuruck kommt.Wir haben jedoch niemals mehr etwas davon gehort.

Im Okt. 194o wurde dem lb. Fern als erstem unsere Famielie das seine Existenz Einkommen.Im Sommer 4o hatten sie noch viele Gaste und konnten von dem Verdienst einige Zeit leben.Ab 194i waren alle Badeplatze fur Juden verboten. Um am Leben zu bleiben und das tagl.Bot bezahlen zu konnen,der lb. Rudi war Lehrl. in einer Maschinenfabr. in Maastricht arbeitete der lb. Fern sehr schwer unter den mudseligsten Umstenden in einer Sandgrube. Mit Fleisch u. Fett versorgten wir sie Wochendlich kostenlos u. die lb. Jettchen tat wie immer sehr viel.

Im Januar 4i mussten alle Juden ihren Radio einliefern,glucklicherweise hatten wir uns keinen Radio angeschaft.

Im Mei kam im Spertplatz Geleen einen Torpedobombe nieder,wodurch in ganz Geleen teilweise bis Lindenhovel alle Scheiben gesprungen waren und von vielen Dachern Dachziegel abgefallen waren.

Trotz grohsen Schwierigkeiten ist es der lb. Gerta und den lb. Max gelungen im Meizu heiraten.Die kirchliche Trauung fand in Valkenburg und zwar in Hannchens-Wohnung statt und waren Famil. Moses Gertas Eltern und [redacted] Der Zeit entsprechend feierten wir den Tag so gut und so schlecht es ging.

Nachdem am 2[redacted]Juni die Deutschen Ruslang einfielen stieg unsere Hoffnung auf ein schnelles Kriegsende.doch hierrin wurden wir wieder enttaucht.

Von unseren Lieben aus Aachen bekamen wir Nachricht,dass sie aus Ihren Wohnungen gesetzt und in Baracken unter gebracht waren.Sie durften nur dasallernotigste mitnehmen. Lebensmittel erhielten die Lieben nur in beschrankter Weise. Fleisch Hulsenfruchte u. Fett bekam den Juden uberhaubt nicht und schickten wir regelmassig Pakete die sie glucklicherweise alle erhielten.

Zu gleicher Zeit erhielten wir Nachricht,dass die ersten Transporte von Judenverschickungen stattfanden.Glucklich waren die Unserigen nicht bei den Ersten.Die Diverse Abschiedsbriefe will ich Euch ersparen mitzuteilen die wir von den Lieben erhielten. Damals dachten wir noch nicht dass uns ein gleiches Schicksal bevorstand.Inzwischen ist die Gestapo hier auch nicht mussig geblieben.

Eines Tages im Sommer 4i hakte sie in Amsterdam alle jud. aussehenden Manner einfach von der Srasse auf u. verschleppte sie nach Mauthausen. Dort mussten diese arme Menschen dann in einer Queksilbergrube unter erbarmlichsten Umstanden arbeiten u. taglich kamen offizielle Todesberichten zu den armen Angehorigen.

Aus Protest streikten daraufhin in Amsterdam alle Arbeiter 3 Tage aber dieser Streik,wohl alleinstehend in der Weltgeschichte,ein Volk streikt fur seine geknechteten judischen Mitbewohner,[redacted] wurde von der Deutsch. Polizeiu. Gestapo mit den brutalsten Unterwlmanieren bestritten u. viele brave Niederlander fanden hierbei den Tod,dadurch das die Verbrecher rucksichtlos in den Menschenmassen schoss.

Wir lebten weiter in Angst u. Schrecken,die Deutschen gewannen Terrain an alle Fronten u. wurden tagl. frecher u. gemeiner in ihrem Auftreten.

Die Papiere fur unsere Auswanderung kamen leider zu spat u. konnten wir trotz all unserer Bemuhungen nichts erreichen da inzwischen das amerk. Konsulat auch geschlossen wurde.

Im Mei 1942 wurde dann unser Geschaft geschlossen die anderen jud. Geschafte waren bereits Nov. 4i geschlossen worden.

Bei einem Kollegen von uns,dem wir unsere Kunden zufuhrten,konnte ich sofort als Geselle arbeiten. Der lb. Max jedoch ging zu einem Bauer arbeiten u. sorgte so fur Lebensmittel die auf Distributi nicht mehr zu bekommen waren.

Im Mei 1942 mussten wir dann den Judenstern auf der linken Brust tragen ein grosser gelber 6 eckiger Davidstern mit der Aufschrift ‚Jood" Sonntags mussten wir dann den Stern erstmalig tragen und was war das Ergebnis?

Die lb. Leni kam Morgens schon von Maastricht u. erzahlte:,dass sie von allen Bekannten u. Unbekannten gegrusst wurde." Mittags ging der lb. Max und ich nach Famil. Wolff in Geleen selbiger ist ein Vetter von Benno Wolffs Frau.Herr Wolff war fruher Verteter von der Fa. Rollmann u. Rose Koln.

Mit uns ging es genau so wie die lb. Leni erzahlte,wir wurden von allen Bekannten u. Unbekannten gegrusst. Kamen wir in einem Zuge oder eine Tram oder Autobus so standen sofort Menschen auf um uns Platz zu machen. Dabei kam noch

noch,dass Juden nur noch 3 Kl. fahren durften u. erst dann einsteigen wenn alle andere Menschen Platz hatten.

Am 3o.Juni kamen weitere neue Mahsnahmen. Diese Verordnungen waren nun so hart,dass viele Juden ihrem Leben durch Selbstmocht ein Ende bereiteten. Ich fuhre einige diese Verordnungen xx,die angeblich zur Aufrechterhaltung der offentlichen Ordnung erlassen wurden an:;

1.Von 2o Uhr bis 6Uhr mussten wir uns in unsere Wohnungen aufhalten.
2.Juden ist es verboten Hauser oder andere Private Einrichtungen zu betreten. 3.Juden durften nur Geschafte zwischen 15&17 Uhr betreten.
4.Juden durfen keinen Frieurladen betreten.
5.Juden durften nicht mehr Reisen auch nicht mehr mit Trams oder Autobussen. 6.Von fast allen Berufen xxxxxxx wurden Juden ausgeschlossen u. mussten sofort entlassen werden u.s.w. u.s.w.

Einige Wochen spater wurden auch unsere Fahrader beschlagnahmt ein Verbot zum Radfahren u. ein jeder der einem Juden ein Fahrrad leihweise abstand wurde schwerstens bestraft.

Zwischen Mei u. Juni 1942 mussten wir fur dem Joodschen Raad von A,dam, die sog. amtl. jud. Stelle die einzig u. allein noch mit Holl.oder Deutschen Behorden in Verbindung treten mochte,eine Fragenliste nicht weniger dann ca. 2oo Fragen ausfullen u. durch diese Liste ausgefullt zu haben musste ein jeder mit Erlaubniss zu sagen,wann u. wo wir zuletzt gewesen hatten.Mit diesen Listen mussten wir selbst zur Gestapo gehen und dass wahrwohl die starkste Nerveneinspannung die ich jeweils mitgemacht habe ich war froh u. glucklich als dieses Haus wieder verlassen konnte. Die Listen waren angeblich ausgefullt um zu imigrieren, Kurz nachdem wir bei der Gestapo vorgerufen waren erhielten wir dann auch gepfeffere Steuerscheine um die fur unsere Auswanderung gesetzlich vorgeschriebene Auswanderungssteuer zu bezahlen.

Bei dieser Gelegenheit war ich zum letzten mal bei Faml. E. Klein u.habe seitdem nichts mehr von ihnen gehort.

Im Mei 1942 wurde der erste Engl. grosse Nachtluftangriff uber Koln ausgefuhrt mit 1ooo Bombenwerfer.Wir rechneten alle mit einem schnellen Frieden aber leider war unsere Meinung falsch. Eine Kolnerin die bei Faml. Wolff zu Besuch war sagte;es heist nicht mehr Koln a/Rhein sondern Koln am ASCH".

Im Juli 1942 begann in Holl.die Verschickung der Juden nach Polen und war beim ersten Transport Reni Kaufmann die Schwester von Gerta.

Am 22 Aug. kam denn die Nachricht dass die lb. Leni u. Ilse sich am 25 bei der ortl. Polizei melden musste wo die Juden sich versammelten u. dann in Autobussen nach Maastricht u. von dort uber Westerborg nach Polen verschickt wurden.Hierzuber zu schreiben fallt mir besonders schwer da wir doch damit gerechnet hatten ,alle zusammen verschickt zu werden. Zwischen Aufruf und Meldung wurden die Hauser in denen Juden wohnten von S. A.bewacht. Trotzdem gelang es vielen Juden zu fluchten u. sich zu verbergen.

Die lb. Kinder zeigten sich sehr sehr stark u. hatten guten Mut sie machten den Abschied der Eltern nicht allzu schwer.Der lb. Max u. Ich brachten die lb. Kinder zum Gemeindehaus. Was sich hier abspielte ist in Worten nicht zu sagen.Von den [illegible] wohnenden Juden waren 25 die nach Polen musste. Da ein jeder25 kg. Gepack mit nehmen durfte,hatten die armen Menschen Rucksacke die sie kaum tragen konnten.Hier sassen nun Frauen mit Kinder von 2Jahree alte Manner Kranke,Eltern nahmen Abschied von ihren Kindern u. Kindern von ihre Eltern. Wie die lb. Jennj dies alles ausgehalten hat,weihs ich bis heute noch nicht. Konnt Ihr meine Lieben Euch vorstellen was es heisst,Kinder von Ihre Mutter weg zu reissen?. Da die lb. xxxxxx Kinder doch das Einzige u. Letzte waren was die lb. Jennj noch hatte. Es sind heute schon uber 2½ Jahre her u. haben wir nichts mehr von ihnen gehort.

Mit demselben Transport sind die Lieben in Valkenburg Hannchen Fern u. Rudiauch weg u. haben von Selbige auch nichts mehr gehort.

Einige Tage spater erhielten der lb. Max u. ich einen Aufruf zur Musterung fur den Arbeitedienst.

Ein Bekannter von der lb. Ilse womit wir leider zu spat in Verbindung kamen,besorgte fur mich einen Schuilplatz.Da ich allein stand u. der lb. Max beim Jood.Raad Geleen war,bin ich den am 8 September 1942 untergetaucht. Der Abschied von der lb. Mutter war fur mich besonders schwer weil ich nicht wusste,was mit den Lieben weiter hin passiert.

Bevor der 2. Aufruf kam waren sehr viele Juden bei guten Hollandern verborgen. Die Deutschen hatten inzwischen auch wieder alle fruheren Offiezieren u. Soldaten als Kriegsgefangene verhaftet u. da sich von diesen und auch von den jungen Leuten die zwangsweise zur Arbeit nach Deutschl.verschickt wurden viele versteckt hielten,die Zahl betrugt dass in allem ca.5oo,ooo Menschen so hatten die untergrundschen Organisationen viel Arbeit zu errichten um all diese Menschen mit Lebensmittelkarten zu versorgen,denn von dem bis'chen essen was ein jeder erhielt,konnte er unmoglich noch eine Person mit durchfuttern.

Wir erhalten, um nur einiges anzufuhren pro Person per Woche: 125 gr. Fleisch m. Knochen 125 gr. Butter 7o gr. Erbsen 3kg. Kartoffeln 1kg Brot usw Die benotigten Lebensmittelkarten für die sogen.onderduiker wurden automatisch von gut georganisierten u.bewaffneten Patrioten aus den einzelenen Amtern gestolen. Auch wurden viele Personen mit falschen Perzonsbewejsen versehen,aus den Gefangnissen befreit viele vooraanstande N.S.B.er ermordet.Wir waren auch mit einem falschen Perzonsbeweijs versehen.

Durch Vermittlung meines jetzigen Hausherrn der von Beruf Verteter ist, erhielt ich von den Lieben immer Nachricht.So horte ich am 11. Nov. 1942,dass die Lieben aus Sittard mit noch vielen Andern auch auf Transport gestellt waren. Sie hatten das grosse Gluck zu der alten Garde zu komman worunter unsere gemeindamen Bekannten Fritz Gottschalk u. Frau aus Geilenkirchen zahlte,,bis heute28.Aug. 42 sind sie noch immer in Westerborg Holl.

Am 28. Sept. 1942 bekam ich Gesellschaft u. kam Herr Wolff aus Geleen wo wir mit befreundet sind auch hier hin. Herr Wolff ist mit einer Arierin verheiratet wasfur uns das Gluck wurde.

Am 8 Okt. 1942 wurde durch ein en Irrtum anders konnen wir uns das nicht erklaren, Geleen ziemlich stark gebombardiert. Es waren mehr dann 1oo Tote u. uber 5oo Hauser vernichtet. Ich horte dies am folgenden Tag und dankte unserm lb. Gott, dass meine Lieben nichts passiert war. Wohl hatten wir soweit es moglich war Kleidung u. Wasche bereits vorher bei guten Nederlander untergebracht. Ungluecklicherweise wurde dass Haus mit dem Erdboden gleich gemacht, sodass wir alles bis auf einige Wertsachen die sich im Keller befanden verloren.

Am 1. April 1943 stand eine neue Verordnung in der Zeitung in der hies es kurz u. bundig, dass alle Juden in allen Provinzen bis zum 1o April diese zu raumen hatten u, sich im K.Z.Lager Vught anzumelden hatten.

Was dies besondere für die lb. Mutter bedeutete konnt Ihr meine Lieben ja vorstellen. Da die lb. Mutter gegen solche Strapazen nicht an konnte, erklarte unser Hausdoktor die lb. Mutter nicht transportfahig. Die Gestapoverbrecher kennt keine Erbarmen u. Mitleid u. wurde so unsere lb. Mutter mit den lb. Gerta u. Max verschickt. Die lb. Jennj konnte durch Kilfe guter Holld. nach entfluchten und kam denn auch zu mir.

In Sittard wurde der lb. Max u. Gerta noch von der Gestapo aus dem Auto geholt u. nach Maastricht gebracht. Hier waren Frauen u. Manner schon getrennt worden. In Maastricht wollten die Bluthunde von den Lieben wissen wo die lb. Jennj geblieben war. Naturlich wussten die Lieben nichts und wurden dann nach 2 Tegen Folterung entlassen u. mussten sich (alleinohne Bewachung in Vught melden, was sie dann auch getan haben. Die s haben wir leider erfahren. Wir verstehen dies nicht. Von Frau Wolff horten wir das der lb. Mx immer gesagt hatte er woltte die lb. Mutter nicht allein lassen konnte aber nicht helfen da ja in Sittard schon Manner u. Frauen getrennt wurden.

In Vught blieben die Lieben nur einige Wochen und wureden dann nach Westerburg transportiert. Die lb. Mutter musste dort sofort im Krankenhaus aufgenommen weredn da Ihre Nerven total versagten.

Hier war es unsere lb. Frau Wolff welche nun jede Woche bes, das lb. Mutter mit Lebensmittelpakete versorgte. Dabei kommt noch, dass den Lieben in Vught alles aber auch nun alles mit Aussonderung, was die Lieben am Leib hatten gestolen, so musste nun die lb. Frau Wolff auch fur die benotigten Kleider sorgen was dies heissen soll nach 3 Jahre Krieg ist in Worten nicht zu schildern.

Alle alle alle Artikel ausser Salz Vim u. Ata sind distribucert u. Textilartkel gibt es auch auf Textilpunkte nirgends mehr zu kaufen.

Im schwarzen Handel sind naturlich immer noch Sachen zu kaufen aber gegen Preise die unerschwinglich sind so kosten z.B.

1kg. Butter fruher fl.	2.6o	heute im schwarzen handel			6o.-
1 kg. Kartffel frh.	o.o8	"	"	"	1.5o
1 packch. Zigrt."	o.2o	"	"	"	1o.-
1 Zigarre "	o.o6	"	"	"	4,-
1st. palmoliv Seife	o.12½	"	"	"	12.-
1 kg. Fleisch	2.-	"	"	"	3o.-
1 Fahrradband	3.5o	"	"	"	175.-
1 kg. Kaffee	1.6o	"	"	"	[illegible]
1 Anzug	6o.-	"	"	"	1ooo.-u. s. w.

Im Juni 1943 wurden vielen Holl. die [illegible] zufallig am Radfahren waren ihre Radar beschlagnahmt u. 14 Tage spater mussten alle Holl. Ihr Radio einliefern. Naturlich wurden viele Radios nicht eingeliefert u. hierfur Sch[illegible] Kasten abgegeben. G.s.d. hatten wir bei den Leuten wo wir schuilten ein 2. Radio u. so horten wir wenigstens immer die neusten engl.amerik.u.russ. Aussendungen. Da bei schwerster Bestrafung, als 1. Strafe Beschlagn, der gesamten Wohnungseinrich, verboten ist Radio Aussendungen zu horen, so wurde dies eben heimlich getan.

Aber als am 8 Sept. 1943 Abends um 1845 Radio London bekannt gab, dass Italien gekapituliert hatte, wussten es 2 Minuten spater schon ganz Holl.

Selbstredend mussten wir bei den Leuten bei denen wir schuilten bez. Wir bez. pro Woche 2o.-fl. ubrigens ein sehr billiger Preis u. haben wir unsere Wertsachen die wir vom Bombardement gerettet hatten vor u. nach verkauft.

Ein Sper [illegible] von uns aus Berlin auch alter Kampfinsatze DDR dort eine leitende Position hatte, konnte die Lieben bis 8 Sept. 1943 halten, dann wurden sie leider nach Polen verschickt. Im Dez. 1943 erhielten wir durch Frau Wolff einen Brief vom lb. Max aus Westerbork, schrieb der arme Kerl wieder um warme Kleidung u. Lebensmittel u. wieder gelang es der lb. Frau Wolff u. Ihre[illegible] Freunden bes. Holl. den Ihr sicher noch kennt, mehrere Pakete zu schicken. Leider haben wir von dem lb. Max nie eine Empfangsbestattigung bekommen.

Ende Januar 1944 horten wir nun, dass die lb. Mutter durch die Verbrecher auch noch nach Polen verschikt wurde und haben auch von der lb. Mutter nichts mehr gehort.

Bis [illegible] ist [illegible] Mones noch [illegible] u. arbeitet der lb. Kurt Zeitweise als Schmied in Zeist u. ist auch hier wieder unsere Freundin Fr. Wolff die den Lieben in Verbindung steht u. noch Lebensmittelpakete sendet.

Am 8 September sitze ich nun bereits 2 Jahre hier ohne in dieser Zeit auch nur ein einziges mal auf der Strasse gewesen zu sein. Hatte mir dieses vorher jemand gesagt so hatte ich bestimmt geantwortet, dass ich dieses nicht aushalten konnte aber wie Ihr sehr, geht alles.

Selbst meinen Anzug den nun bald 2 Jahre nicht mehr vom Leibe gehabt habe, macht noch mit und tragt er sich glanzend. Wir haben ja auch in glanzenden „Verhaltnissen".

Uber unser Leben hier Konnte ich dicke Bucher schreiben, doch dies wurde jedoch zu weit fuhren u. [illegible] ich, dass ich hierruber Euch meine Lieben Mundlich einmal alls erzahlen kann. Wir schlafen viel, lesen noch mehr spielen ab u. zu karten u. haben wir g.s.gehr gut holld sprechen u. etwas schreiben gelernt. Leider konnten wir kein engl. lernen da wir sehr leise uns unterhalten musste und neben uns ein Gestapo Mann wohnte.

Wir sitzen in Tegelen bei Venlo hier ist ein der grossten Flugplatze von West-Europa angelegt. Mehrmals wurde der Flugplatz von amerik.u.engl. Flugz.

Flugzeuge gebombadierd und als wir dann die 4ooo kg. Bomben sausen horen,dann konnt Ihr Euch ja unsere Angst vorstellen. Ausserdem mussen alle Amerik. u. Engl. die das Ruhrgebiet bombadieren uber uns hin weg fliegen u. ist dies fur die lb. Jennj doppelt schlimm da sie am 15. Okt. 42. das Bombadament in Geleen mit gemacht hat und so ein Bombadement nie in seinem Leben vergisst.

Es ist naturlich sehr interesant zu sehen, wie die aufsteigenden Jager gegen die Bombenwerfer anfliegen u. sich gegenseitig beschiessen. Aber das Interesse weicht vor der Gefahr,da Diese sehr grosse ist denn es kommt haufiger vor das ein Jager oder Bombenwerfer nieder sturzen. Denn wo die nieder kommen bleibt kein Stein auf dem Andern stehen und ist es auch hier im Ort haufiger vorgekommen,dass Hauser dem Erdboden gleich gemacht werden.

Wir leben bei kath. Menschen u. ist dann das Gebet:;Gelobt sei Jesus-kristus und Schma Jisroel auf unseren allen Lippen."

Ein gutes hat dieses Ubel,die lb. Jenny hat haufiger Last nach einem gewissen Ort zu gehen. Sind denn die Flieger dagewesen,so geht es wie geschmiert. Sie sitzen wir denn hier und warten mit grosster grosster Sehnsucht auf den lang ersehnten Frieden und auf unsere Lieben aus Polen.

Am 23. Aug. meldete Radio London,dass Paris gefallen sei u.am folg. Tag horten wir,dass Rumanien gekapituliert hat u.an der Seite der Gealliierten mit kampft. Am 4. Sept. wurde Brussel befreit u. am 8.Sept. erklarte Finnland den Krieg. Am 9. Sept. erklarte Bulgarien an Deutschl. den Krieg.

Hier auf den Strassen sahen wir nichts wie zuruckziehende Deutsche Soldaten unsere nachsten Nachbarn Moffen,verliessen nachdem sie ihre ganze Einrichtung verschenkt hatten fluchtartig am do.Sept. morgens um 4 Uhr ihr Haus. Wir verkerten in unbeschreiblichen Freude u. dachten spatestens in 4-5 Tagen befreit zu sein.Leider war aber unsere Freude verfruht.

Meine Lieben die 3 Monaten Sept. Okt. Nov. waren fur uns allen die grosste Nervoneinspannung die ein Mensch aushalten kann. Jetzt war nicht nur das Wachten auf unsere Befreiung nein das Schlimmste war Razzia wo wir jeden Tag u. Nacht mit rechnen musste so hat mein Freund Wolff u.ich Tag u. Nacht wachen mussen u.dann auf einem ungeheizten Zimmer,dabei kommt noch keine Fettigkeiten mehr zum essen sodass wir bis jetzt nur glucklich mit Rheumatik in den Armen davon gekommen sind.

Am 17. 9.tauchten plotzlich Deutsche Bahnbeamte auf die sich selbst echt u. links von uns Quartier suchten,diese frugen auch unsere Mevr. fur Unterdach aber Mewr. war schlagfertig u.sagte sie hatte 6 Kinder u. kame selbst Zimmer zu kurz. Zuge fur Zivilisten fuhren nicht mehr u.seit 2. Sept. horten wir nichts mehr von unsere Freunding Frau Wolff. Von 18.9.bekamen wir auch keinen elekt. Strom mehr u.konnten hierdurch was uns am schlimmste getroffen hatte auch kein Radio mehr horen waren nur auf Geruchte angewiesen wussten nich einmal ob Geleen befreit war. Zeitungen erschienen auch nicht mehr,da wir vom Suden, Westen u. Norden in einem Umkreis von 4o-5o klm.eingeschlossen waren und nur der Osten also Deutschl. fur uns offen war.

Später erschien dann eine Venlosche Zeitung diesemusste aber tagl. geholt werden,da alle Manner von 16-6o Jahr it. einer Verordnung Verstarkungs Arbeiten verrichten musste,da sich kaum ein Holl.gemeldet hatte,wurden Manner auf der Strasse die keinen Arbeits Ausweis hatten einfach gezwungen diese Schanzarbeiten zu verrichten.Ausserdem wurden ein paar mal in der Woche einfach alle Fahrader Mannen u.Frauen unter dem Hintern weg auf der Strasse beschlagnahmt.

Plotzlich tauchte eine neue Gefahr auf ieogende Poolsche Russ.Ukrein. und Deutsche Manner u. Frauen kamen nach hier um Schanzarbeiten zu verrichten und diese Leute wurden zum Teil in Privathauser unter gebracht.Acu hier kamen wir wieder mit ein blaues Auge davon.

Am 28.u.29Okt. wurde Venlo schwer gebombadiert u. dadurch sassen wir ein paar Tage ohne Wasser.Die Deutsche Polizei u. die Deutschen Behorden einschl. der Partei ubten seit 11.9. die alleinige Macht hier aus,da alle guten Niederl. Stadt u. Eisenbahnbeamten einschl. Burgermeister u. Polizei untergetaucht waren so musste eine Organisation ins Leben gerufen Werden die alle Untergetauchten vor einer evtl. Razzia warnen musste.Dank der Mitarbeit klappte alles wie am Schnurchen. Kaum war etwas los oder ei jeder wusste es.Es gab naturlich auch viel blinder Alarmu.als dann am 2. Nov.endl die erste wirkliche Razzia stattfand war dies fur die Moffen eine grosse Pleite.

Auch wir hatten in unserem Haus einen aparten Unterschlupfwinkel,sassen den ins Haus kommende Moffenpolizisten im warsten Sinne des Wortes auf dem Kopf u. nach 4 Stunden war die Razzia vorbei u. wir dieses mal G. sind. den Verbrechern zu schlimm gewesen. Am 4. Nov. wurde Venlo nochmals sehr stark gebombadiert u. die Innenst. in Schutt u. Asche gelegt u. nun konnte auch eine Zeitung nicht mehr erscheinen.

Inzwischen war jedoch der gealliierten Nachschub in Betrieb gesetzt. Zwei [illegible] gaben Mittags u. Abends diese Berichte unter dem Namen;Snoeki" aus so waren wir wieder auf dem Laufenden wo an den Fronten Gefechte stattfanden u.horten wir, dass die Amerikaner die Provinz Zeeland u. Nord Brabant vom Feinde befreiten nachdem die Inseln Walchern u. Zuid Beveland die die Hafeneinfahrt von Antwerpen bilden entgultig in geallierder Hand war,wussten wir dass auch bald unsere Befreiungsstunde schlagen wurde aber unsere Geduld wurde auf eine harte Probe gestellt.NH. Die 9. Patrioten gingen mit einem kleinen Pfiff Apar. in einen Hotel daran,wo die Moffen einquartiert waren. Dieselben bekamen Strom aus Deutschland.

Am 1o. Nov. war nochmals eine Razzia u. auch diese die 24 Stunde dauerte wurde von uns gut uberstanden.

Die Moffen Partei Bonzen in ihren gelben Uniformen waren sehr zahlreich vertretenu. keine Fabrik u. kein Geschaft u.war es noch so klein wurde von ihrem Besuch verschont u.alles aber auch alles wurde sogenannt legal durch Verordnungen,Verfugungen ect.gestolen. Pferde, Kuhe,Wagen, Einrichtungen, Maschinen, Lebensmittel,Teppiche, Gardinen alles alles nahmen diese Schweine sehr ironisch ; Wenn wir es hier lassen wird es jadoch von den Amer. oder Engl. gebombadiert u. wir konnen die Sachen gut gebrauchen!

Die Deutsche Faml. von neben uns kamen auch einige Tage spater mit einen grossen Mobelwagen zuruck u. alle verschenkten Sachen forderten diese wieder zuruck. Die Moffin brachte sogar eine Liste mit um nur ja nichts zu vergessen.

6.) vergessen.
Wir alle hoffen nur,dass diesen Barbaren in Deutschl. alles ausgebommt wird.
Von unsere Freundin Frau Wolff konnten wir naturlich keine Lebensmittelkarten mehr erhalten aber auch diese Soge war schnell behoben, denn der Chef des hiesigen Distributiekantors geb uns regelmahsig unsere uns zustehenden Bonns. Unsere Rationen wurden von Woche zu Woche vermindert u. zuletzt erhielten wir noch 3/4 Brot per Woche auf dies Bonnen. Kartffeln gibt es schon i4 Tage nicht mehr. Zum nachsten Bauern der dierekt an der Maas liegt ist geevaquiert u. alle Kartoofen durch die Moffen in Beschlag genommen unser Vorat ist schon lange auf und haben wir von guten Bekannten 5o kg. bekommen. Wenn wir bis dahin nicht befreit sind,wissen wir nicht was wir anfangen.
Für uns Manner ist es das schlimmste, dass wir nichts zu rauchen haben u.weder mit Geld noch guten Worten waren Zigaretten u. Zigarren aufzutreiben. Ein guter Hausfreund ein Nichtraucher jedoch noch etwas Rauchwaren gespart u.von ihm erhielten wir dann rookertjes u. als auch sein Vorrat erschopft war besorgte er uns Tabaksblatter aus eignem Garten. Um i Zigarette zu rauchen brauchten wir io/12 Streichholzer u. ein Geschmak wie : an ansicht den Hof mit Muh und Not".
In der Nacht vom i2 zum i3 Nov. war ein furchtbarer Larm von kommenden u. abfahrenden Autos mit Soldaten auf unsere Strasse u. des Morgens sahen wir dann, das die Soldaten damit beschaftigt waren direkt hinter unserem Haus auf einem Hokijfeld eine Batterie Feld &Abwehrgeschütze aufzustellen. 24 Stunden später drohnten die ersten Salvo's der 8,8Geschütze. Ein Radau als ob die Welt untergehen wurde u. unser Haus trillte in seinen Fugen. Zuerst schossen die Soldaten allein auf Flugzeuge spater jedoch auch zur Front. Die geallierde Offensive hatte am i6. Nov. begonnen u. bereits seit Mitte Okt. konnten wir die Scheinwerfer der Geallierden am Firmament sehen. Im Hause neben uns fruher von den Moffen bewohnt, nistete sich der Stab der Batterie & die Telefonleitungen zu ihm lagen in unserm Garten. Fast unsere gesamte Einrichtung hatten wir inzwischen im unserem Keller gebracht u.das dies gut war bewies uns, ein Artillerie Front schnellfeuer Duell, dass am i7. ii. stattfand von 2o,15 bis 22.45Uhr dauerte.An schlafen war in dieser Nacht nicht zu denkenu. unsere erste Arbeit am folgende Tage war, die Betten im Keller aufzustellen u. seit dieser Zeit Nacht hausen wir dann im Keller u. schlafen u.essen auch im Keller u. ausser um mal etwas frische Luft zu schnappen u. zum W.C.gehen bleiben wir fast immer im Keller.Nur mein Freud Wolff u. ich losen uns alle 2 Stunden ab, da immer einer oben muss sein um Ausschau zu halten fur evtl. Razzias. Hier ist keine Sprache von der Sprichwortlichen "Judische Angst" besonders ist mein Freund Wolff der nie an Sport getan ausser Dauerlauf. Sport stellt hier seinen Mann. Selbst unser Hausgenosse zu viel Angst bei Granatfeuer aus dem Keller zu kommen.N.B. Unser Versteckplatz bei Razzias liegt zwischen den Dachfannen u. dem darunter liegenden Holz u.wenn Granaten uber uns hinweg floten u. rund herrum einschlagen so haben wir ofter das Gefuhl als ob durch die Luftdrucke das Haus in ein sturzt u. wir unter dem Schutt begraben wurden.Sobald die Razzien vorruber sind u. wir aus unserem Versteckplatz herraus kommen danken wir zuerst unserem lb. Gott, dass wir wieder mit dem Leben davon kammen.
Am 2i. des Nachmittage um 17.45 kam ein Feldwebel zu uns und frug um Einquartierung für 2 Off. und 3 Mann.Geben sie uns das Zimmer nicht freiwillig, dann nehmen wir das ganze Haus in beschlag,das war sene Antritts rede.Sofort begonnen die Soldaten sich einzurichtenu. nach einer halben Stunde waren diese installiert u. gerade begannman auch.Telefon zu legen als die Meldung kam:wir hauen ablu. um 17.45. waren wir wieder eigne Herren im eignen Haus. Ein Soldat sagte zu Mevr. :Freuen sie sich,dasswir wieder abhauen sonst ware es hier miss geworden.Die geallierten schiessen nahmlich 1 a.In 14 Tagen ist es bereits das 6 mal das wir, kaum steht die Batterie wieder weiter zurück mussen.
Und dass der Soldat Recht hatte haben wir am folgende Tage am eignem Leibe gespurt. Am 2i. Nov. war die Batterie verschwunden.Wir atmeten auf. Die Ruhe die wiederx eingekehrt war fur unsere Nerven die beste Medizin. Der22. Nov. war ein echter Novembertag;die Wolken hingen sehr tief u. waren Regenwolken. Fliegertatigkeit? Aufklarer waren nicht in der Luft,alles war ruhig. Die Front war noch 2 klm. von uns ab getrennt durch die Maas. Abends um 8 Uhr wir wollten gerade ins Bett gehen,da wir ja kein Licht haben u. uns mit kleinen Kerzen u. Wachslichtchen behelfen mussen gehen wir mit den Hühnern [illegible] Granate konnte nicht weit weg von uns eingeschlagen sein.3 - 4 Sekuden spater hore Einschl. und wir horten Dachpfannen [illegible] Scheiben klirren.Ein jeder von uns betete u. bei [illegible] Schlage es gewesen waren u. keiner hatte den Mut auf die Strasse zu gehen, Erst eine ½ Stunde später gingen wir durch unser Haus u. traten ofters auf Glassche scherben.Licht konnten wir nicht anmachen,da unsere Verdunklungspapier weg waren. Am nachsten Morgen sahen wir denn den Schaden.Unser linkes Nachbarhaus hatte einen Granatvolltreffer erhalten u. die Granate hatte eine tiefes loch bis zur ersten Etage geschlagen. Vor uns auf der Strasse u. bei unserm Nachbr gegenüber ebenfalls Einschläge u. einige nur keine 2 mt.davon entfernt wo am Vortage eine der Kanonen gestanden hatte, direkt scharf auf dem gewesenen Munitionsaufschlagplatz dieser Kanone ist ein Volltreffer zurecht gekommen. Ein Wunder? Wer weiss es. Unser Leben liegt in Gottes Hand er behutet u. beschutzt uns.
Wir sind Niemandsland geworden u. seit dem 23. Nov. fliegen geallier. u. Deutsche Granaten uber uns hin. Wir horen die Abschusse u. Einschlage u. dazwischen das floten der fortsausenden Granaten.
Seit dem 23. ist die Maas hinter uns,iklm. von uns weg erreicht seit dem 24.ist?? die Maas bei Venlo 4 km.von uns entfernt ebenfalls erreicht. Wie lange wir nun noch auf unsere Befreiung warten mussen,wissen wir a. nichten. Ich schreibe diesen Brief an 2. Nv. & werde ihn s. g. w. zu Hause lesen.
Die Partei Bonzen u. Eisenbahner sind seit Gestern weg. Seit heute sind Soldaten damit beschaftigt die Weichen u.sonstiges Eisenbahnmaterial zu stehlen und uns sind nach wie vor Hände u. Füsse gebunden.
Oft hatten wir den Plan gefasst durch die Linien hin nach Hause zu fluchten,kein Mensch wagte das Risiko auf sich nehmen.

4/4

Vergessen habe ich noch, dass wir am 22. Nov. zum ersten male seit 2 Jahren u.3Mon. wieder einen Friseur die Haare geschnitten wurde u. war dies auch einer grohse Freude fur uns. Ich sehe jetzt wieder Menschlich aus u. Hoffen die Geallierten schnell ,dann konnen wir wenigsten die 5o km. bis Geleen zu Fuss ohne auf zu fallen laufen.

Ein Elektriker,Freund des Hause hat uns am 23. ii. gezeigt,dass wir doch Radio horen konnen indem wir ein paar Drahte in den elektr. kasten einsetzten. Der Strom kommt von Kaldenkirchen ist fur die hiesigen Moffensoldaten bestimmt. Wir horen also Radio m. Deutsch, Strom .Feiner kann es doch nichtwas?.
Seit dem i7. Nov. haben wir unsere Kleider Tag und Nacht nicht mehr vom Leibe gehabt,da wir ja jeden Moment mit Razzia rechnen muss. Unsere eigne Lebensmittel-vorrate sind seit 4 Sept. erschopft.Wir essen resp. leben von trokenem Brot u. Mosessuppe";aus dem Wasser gezogen."Apfelkraut dunn geschmiert ist ab und zu fur uns eine Delikatesse. Die 1b. Jenni hat 2 Bettucher getauscht vor i.½ Kg. speck.

Meine Lieben was wir seit Mitte Sept. mitgemacht haben ist in Worten nicht wieder zu geben. Unser Hausherr ist durch dies alles 4 verruckt geworden mit ihm [illegible] um zu gehen. Die Aufregungen uber Razzias,Einquartierung oder evtl. Evakuierung sind [illegible] zu schildern. Ein jeder ist [illegible] und selbst krank.. Glaubt nun nicht,dass ich übertreibe im Gegenteil die nackte Wirklichkeit ist viel schlimmer unser altes Elend ist grohs.

Heute am 2. Dez. schreibe meinen Bericht weiter. Wir sitzen immer noch unter dem Joch der Moffen und unser Leben wird von Tag zu Tag unertraglicher. Auf alle unsere Bonnen erhalten wir seit dem 27. Nov. nur noch ein halbes Broot per Person per Woche. Kartoffeln erhalten wir ab und zu von guten Freunden die von ihren eignen Vorraten abgeben. Hinzu kommt noch,dass wir Tag u. Nacht von engl. Granaten bestochen werden u. wachst unsere Angst,ob wir diesen Krieg uberleben bestandig.Freitag den 24. Nov. hatten wir einen ruhigen Tag,wir horten keine Granaten mehr und glaubten schon das Abfeuern der Granaten auf unsere Gebiet sei eingstellt und fassten wir neuen Mut. Samstags den 25.Nov. morgens war esebenfalls still. Wir alle [illegible] im Erdgeschoss. Plotzlich um ii.4o ein entsetzlich harter Knall,noch einer,noch einer und und wieder und wieder ein furchtbarer Larm, Wir schmissen uns auf den Grund und auf allen vieren kroch ein jeder zur Kellertreppe.Ein paar Minuten darauf gingen wir wieder zum Erdgeschoss und ein schrecklicher Anblick bot sich unseren Augen. Vor unserem Hause war eine Granate zurecht gekommen die ein tiefesLoch in der Strasse gebohrt hat und 3Schritte von uns weg lag ein Fuhrmann mit Pferd tot,geroffen durch Granatscherben.Links von uns io Schritte weiter ein anderer Toter,dem durch Granatscherben der halbe Bauch aufgerissen wordwn war. Naturlich waren alle Hauser in unserer Umgebung mehr oder weniger stark beschadigt aber dieser materielle Schaden ist belanglos, wennes um Menschenleben geht.Bei guten Freunden von uns ist eine Granate in der Kuche eingeschlagen,in der die Hausfrau gerade am arbeiten war,ihr Sohn sah dieAussenmauer einstürzen,schmiss seine Mutter zu Boden,legte einen Stuhl uber die arme alte Frau und zog sie so bis unter die Treppe und nur durch.Gottes Hand erlitten Mutter u. Sohn nur ein paar Hautabschurfungen. Eines weihs ich, diesen 25. Nov. werde ich, wenn ich den Kriegsbrebe,nie vergessen. Sei diesem Tag ist es auch sonst wieder rumorig.Verschiedene Dorfer um uns mussten auf Moffenbefehl evakuieren,Die Meisten Manner suchen ihr Heil in der Flucht und fanden ein neues Heim hier in Tegelen.Dies ist den Moffen naturlich zu Ohren gekommen und vom 27. Nov. bis 2ö. Nov.waren hier mehr als 3oo Himmlerknechte sg. gr. Polizei damit beschaftigt Razzien zu halten und mehr dann 2oo Manner fielen diesen Bluthunden leider in die Hande und wurden nach Deutschl. abtransportiert.Unsere Nerven waren auf)s aussersteangespannt und wir danken unserem lb. Goot,dass uns diese Kerle nicht gefunden haben.So ging von Woche zu Woche. Am 23. Dez. erhielten wir den auch Bericht,dass wir evquieren musste,in i½ Stunde mussten wir fertig gepackt sein. Jeder traff vorbereitungen.Mein Freund Wolff und ich hatten jedoch vor nicht mit zu gehen und machten uns unterm Flurwo kein Keller war ein Loch und schafften da die Lebensmittel die wir noch hatten herrein.Das gr. Problem war naturl.Wasser, Die Wasserleitung war schon i Monat ausser betrieb und mussten Wasse bei bekannte von der Pumpe geholt werden.So fullten wir Flaschen mit Wasser und schafften dies auch nach unsere Schuilplatz. Es wurde 3 Uhr und noch immer horten wir nichts , bis um 5Uhr denn endlich die Nachricht kam,Evaquieren ist i4. Tage ausgestellt. Was dies fur uns bedeutete konnt Ihr Euch nicht vorstellen.Wir sagten uns Zeit gewonnwn alles Gewonnen.

Heilig Abend sassen wir im Keller und hatten am Tage von Zuckerruben Kraut gemacht so hatten wir denn am ersten Weihnachtstage Kraut fur aufs Brot.

In der ersten Woche von Januar 1945 starben in Venlo 9o Zauglinge an unterernahrung.Ami4. Jan. musste Venloo offieiell evacueren und Tegelen sollte am andern Tage evacueren.Leider Gluecklich war die Evacuatie von Tegelen nur geruchte.Am 16. Jan. horten wir,dass die [illegible] hatten begonnen und hatten wir wieder Mut gefasst,dass es nur noch einige Tage dauern kann bis wir befreit werden.Wie gross war unsere Enttauschung als wir hörten,dass die Truppen vor Roermond liegen blieben und wir wiedr nicht befreit wurden.Dafur bekamen wir am andern Tage 2mal Razzia Morgens um io Uhr und abends um 6Uhr.Abends sassen wir gerade beim Abendbrot und hatten wir an diesem Tage zum ersten Mal Pellkartoffel mit Karoten fur uns ein Festessen,da wurde auf der Tur geschlagen und hiess das Komando;sofort aufmachen! Wolff u. ich liefen sofort die Treppe herrauf und mussten im Dunkeln uber Balken,um in unseren Schuilplatz zu kommen auf Hande u. Fusse krichen.Aber mit Gottes hilfe sind wir hier auch wieder gut abgekommen.Am 23 Jan. kam die Grune Polizei u. suchte nach Divans u. Wolldecken! auch hier gabs bei uns ein Laulonu.Am 9 Febr. kamen Morgen,um io.3o 6oo gr.Poliz. und musste in einer Stunde dass Zentrum von Tegelen evacueren.Auch diese Evacuati wurde wieder 3Tage ausgestelltbis am ii Febr. Morgens io Uhr i5o von diese Bluthunde wieder kamen und trieben die Menschen aus ihre Wohnungen.Von iooo Menschen die sie haben mussten brachten sie 35o nach Kaldenkirchen,wo dieselben gluecklicherweise nicht mehr weiter transportiert werden konnten,da die Geallieerten samtl. Zuge u. Bahnhofe gebombadiert hatten und konnten die armen Menschen bis zur Ihre Befreiung dort bleiben.

Am 22. Febr. bekamen wir noch 4. Menschen aus einem Nachbar Dorf, die vor den Deutschen fluchten mussten .

8. fluchten mussten.
Diese Menschen hatten sich 10 Tage unter der Erde verstackt,konnten es aber nicht mehr aushalten und mussten so auch geholfen werden. Glucklicherweise brachten sie noch etwas Lebensmittel mit und waren wir auch wieder geholfen.

Am 28. Febr. kam denn nach langer Zeit wieder einmal eine gute Nachricht u, zwar, das Evacuieren fur gut ist ausgestellt und kamen auch schon Menschen von Kaldenkirchen zuruck.Am selben Abend horten wir, dass amerk. Panzer in Kaldenkirchen seien,und auf Venlo durch stossten. Diese Nachricht war fur uns Unglaublich und schenkten weiter keinen Glauben darran.Jedoch eine Stunde spater kam ein Freund von uns und befestigtedieses Gerucht.

Meine Lieben,was jetzt kommt ist nicht zu sagen,wir weinten vor Freude und konnten es noch nicht glauben,dasswir den Krieg und so unsere Befreihung nach all diese Starpassen erleben durften.Wir glaubten es erst dann, als wir Freitag Morggn 2Lastautos mit Amerik!Soldaten sahen.Das Dorf war direkt in Feststimmung,alles war geflagt und wir gingen widder zum ersten mal als freie Menschen auf die Strasse.

Jetzt woll ten wir naturlich so schnell moglich nach Hause,da kein Auto oder ein anderes Verfuhrmittel zu haben war,wollten wir Sonntags Morgens zu Fuss gehen.Nachmittags um 4 Uhr schellte es und von dem wir stand unser Freund,der Juwelier P.van Gerwen u. ein Freund von ihm der mit einem Auto kamen uns ab zu holen.Die Freude konnt Ihr Euch nicht vorstellen,dass wir so schnell schon nach Hause konnten.

Auf der Fahrt von Tegelen nach Geleen,bekamen wir ein kleines Bild vom modernen Krieg.Aufgeblasene Brucken zerschossenen Hauser u. Kirchen ausgestorbene Dorfer.In Geleen war glucklich nichts gepassier und konnt Ihr Euch den Empfang bei Frau Wolff vorstellen.Sie hatte auch Ihren Mann 2½ Jahre nicht mehr gesehen.

Wir schliefen nach langer Zeit wieder einmal in einem frischen B ett,bekamen B ohnenkaffee und richtigen Tee sassen wieder an einem gedekten Tisch was uns alle wie ein Marchen vor kam.

Hier hatte man amm Tage der Befreiung an unserem fruheren Schaufenstar,ein Plakat gehangt;mit der Aufschrift:;Hier word weer gevestigt Slagerei Baum. Dieser Bericht ist in verschiedenen Zeitungen gekommen und vom engl. Sender ausgesandt wurde.Jull Gottschalk hatte dies schoft u. schrieb an unsere alte Adresse.Diesen Brief fanden wir bei unserer Ruckkehr aber er musste 5 Monate auf uns warten.Wie Ihr aus unseren Briefen inzwischen gelesen habt,haben wir unser Geschaft noch nicht eroffnen konnen.

Wir hatten wohl das grosse Gluck,dass wir von unseren weggeschaften Sachen den gr. Teil der Wasche u. Haushaltsachen zuruck erhielten die unsere Freunde fur uns bewahrt hatten.

Alle jud. Hauser sind von den Deutschen ausgeplundert worden und nach Deutschl. verschickt.Wir fanden also nichts mehr vor.

Nachdem die Besatzungstruppen,die in unser Haus waren abruckten konnten wir am 15. Marz einziehen.Das Haus haben wir auf unsere Kosten vom Speicher bis Keller wieder in Ordnung machen lassen.

Wir bekamen von der hiesigen Organisation Mobel, 1Kuche,1Wohn. und ein Schlafzimmer.Die Mobel sind vorlaufig leihweise und mussen dieselben in einigen Wochen bez.Gucklich sind wir,dass wenn unsere Lieben aus Polen zuruck kommen wieder ein eignes Heim vorfinden.Wir hoffen u. wissen,dassIhr meine Lieben uns dabei finaz. helfen wollt,denn unsere Mittel sind erschopft wie wir Euch schon schrieben.

In der Hoffnung bald Personlich Post von Euch zu bekommen verbleibe ich fur heute mit den besten Grussen u. Kussen fur Euch Allen

Euer

Karl.

Schikt den Brief auch an den 1b Albert,da wir Ihn ja nicht erreichen konnen.

P.S. Beinahe hatte ich was sehr wichtiges vergessen,kannst Du 1b. Benno mir nicht was Zigaretten schicken? Im vorraus schon meinen besten Dank.

daaaaag.

End of Karl Baum Collection